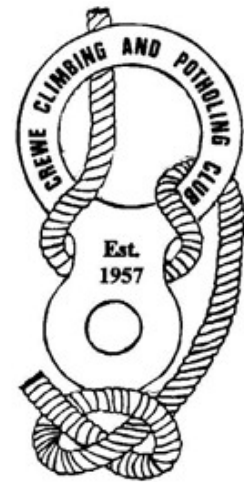




C.C.P.C. Newsletter 138. October / November 2022

Log on to www.ccpc.org.uk

Editor: Steve Knox
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After my brief trip 'over the pond' I'm back in the U.K. and happy to acknowledge how good it is to be home in our amazingly varied and beautiful country. From the various e-mails it is clear that Club Members have continued to be active, both in support of 'official' Club Meets, and as small groups of friends enjoying more casually organised trips. All signs of a healthy Club. **Steve Knox**

Planned Club Meets, etc., from October to December 2022:



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:

Sun, 9 th Oct.	Pegleg Pot, (Lower Easegill Cavern) Easegill area, Yorkshire.	One 21 metre SRT pitch, and several small climbs and pitches. Entrance and lowest level are flood prone.
Sat. 22 nd Oct.	Cumberland Cavern /Wapping Mine. <i>Alt.: Mistral Hole. Easegill, Yorks.</i>	Matlock, Derbyshire. – no SRT.
Sun. 6 th Nov.	Lancaster Hole / Easegill, Yorkshire. <i>Alt. Ireby Fell Cavern, Yorkshire.</i>	Classic, extensive & varied system, with numerous routes & SRT pitches. <i>Classic system - SRT.</i>
Mon. 7 th Nov.	CCPC Monthly Meeting. 8.30 pm. Usually also accessible to Members via Zoom.	'The Red Bull', Butt Lane, Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent. ST7 3AJ.
Sat. 12 th (or Sun. 13 th) Nov.	Waterways Swallet, Hamps-Manifold area, Staffordshire.	Annual car-park clear-up (vegetation), followed by caving trip (no SRT).
Sat. 19 th Nov.	Peak Cavern, Derbyshire. <i>Alt. Mandale Mine, Derbyshire.</i>	Major cave system -various route choices – all standards. Interesting Mine – wet wading in sough.
Sun. 4 th Dec.	Minera Mine, North Wales. <i>Alt. Grand Turk Passage (same area).</i>	
Mon. 5 th Dec.	CCPC Monthly Meeting. 8.30 pm. Usually also accessible to Members via Zoom.	'The Red Bull', Butt Lane, Kidsgrove, Stoke-on-Trent. ST7 3AJ.

Plenty of other trips continue to take place, especially now, as government restrictions (Covid) have been removed. Even so, some members may still be self-isolating or 'shielding' for personal reasons. Please try to support Club trips when you can.

Steve Knox, Ed.



Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation:

DCRO team members continue to be ready to assist whenever required, and will use PPE, where appropriate. Training continues.

<https://www.facebook.com/DerbyshireCaveRescue>

Wed. 5 th Oct.	Aspects of animal rescues, and supporting divers.	Staden Lane, DCRO Base, Buxton.
Mon. 17 th Oct.	Engineering equipment and techniques.	To be arranged.
Sat. 29 th Oct.	Emergency Services Day.	Buxton.
Tues. 1 st Nov.	Casualty-Care scenarios.	Staden Lane, DCRO Base, Buxton.
Sat. 19 th Nov.	Full day exercise.	
Wed. 7 th Dec.	Use of Gas Detectors.	
Mon. 19 th Dec.	Team Supper & Training Review.	



Caving in Sheffield Cathedral - 3rd September 2022 Jenny Drake

The Sheffield Adventure Film Festival (SHAFF) came back in 2022 after COVID. It features all sorts of outdoorsy films and related events.

DCRO were invited to participate in the AV showing of "The Honour of Being Human" on 3rd September, based on the story of the 1959 Neil Moss rescue attempt, written by the late George Cooper for 'Descent' magazine in 1985. Three of the team turned up at Sheffield Cathedral, with a collection of rescue equipment ancient and modern, plus some collection buckets. From a Neil Robertson stretcher, originally designed for rescuing sailors and dockers from ships holds over a century ago, through an incredibly heavy welded steel folding stretcher, to the up-to-date 'Slix 100' stretcher, telephones, and Nicola 3 cave radios, a 'stinky' (carbide lamp), and modern LED lamps, wire ladders, and SRT rope. I took my reasonably modern caving and SRT kit to wear. The other two were in their DCRO branded surface clothes.

The AV show was held, appropriately enough, in the crypt. It featured a reading of the article in the dark, with photos projected on the white vaulted roof. These were mainly taken by Paul Deakin in the '70's, with a few from the shout itself. Decades afterwards, but with the exception of wet suits, the equipment was similar to that used in 1959. The show ran repeatedly during the course of the afternoon.

At the same time, climber and stand-up comedian Niall Grimes was in the adjacent chapel talking about various funny and thought-provoking incidents he'd experienced. We joined him and the sessions evolved in to mixing his anecdotes with us talking about DCRO and contributions from various audience members. One of those was the son of George Cooper, who wrote the original article.

An unusual and interesting afternoon. Not often one gets to wear caving gear in a church!

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For George Cooper's original, full article, see:

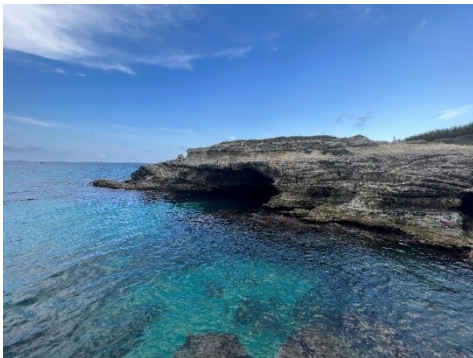
Descent No.62 - January 1985 - pages 20-27 - 'Neil Moss - after 25 years, the lessons which were learned - part 1.'

Descent No.63 - March 1985 - pages 32-36 - 'Neil Moss - a turning point in British Cave rescue - part 2.'

Editor.



Caving in Italy.



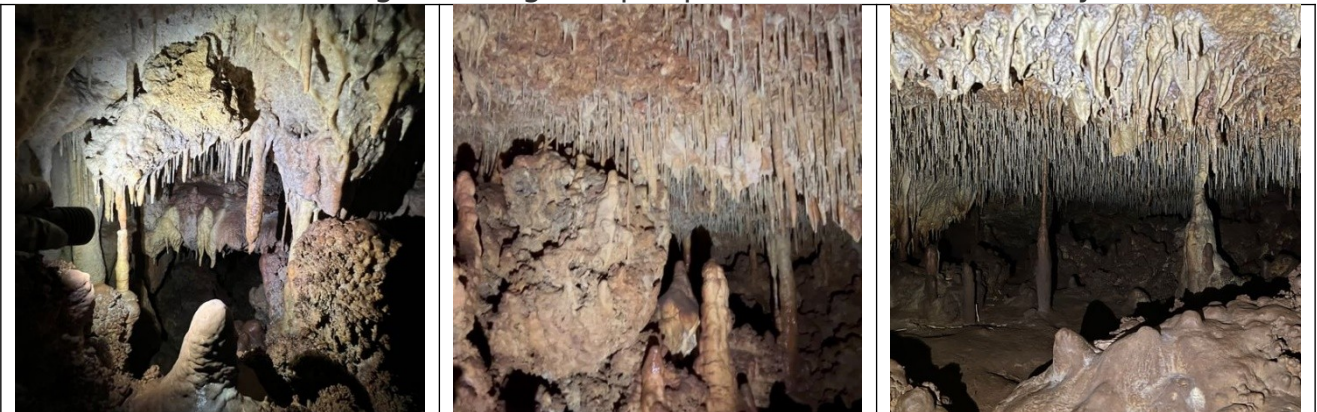
Summer 2022.

C.J.

If anyone has a hankering for beaches AND caves (often in combination) then I can give you the answer: Salento. The region is full of coastal karst features and caves, some accessible from land and some only accessible by sea. The majority of beaches are attached to at least one cave, and gives the hyperactive amongst us something to do whilst their 'SO' rolls their eyes on a sunbed. I had put some feelers out for caving partners in the area but was told by most locals that "nobody does that here.. it's weird".

Above: Grotta della Monaca

Whilst this all sounded familiar, there is a rich history of subterranean exploration in the region and there have been some significant discoveries including pre-historic cave paintings in the area. Unfortunately the regional caving club seemed rather inactive, so it was up to me to find my own fun. The alternative was reading the Berger trip report on the beach in envy...



There is a diverse selection of caves in the area, from sulphur caves in Santa Cesarea Terme, to sandstone caves in Otranto. Underwater caves can be found easily by sensing the cold-water springs during a relatively warm swim along the coastline. Many have large air pockets and often connect to other sea outlets, providing some fun-snorkelling through-trips.



After a few trips to the region, this year I came prepared with enough gear to push a few of the caves I'd previously only scratched the surface of.

Most caves were only accessible from the sea and incompatible with my phone, although I hope to have a waterproof camera for future trips. I have attached a link to a dropbox with a collection of photos from this year's trip: a few caves and a couple of impressive karst features in the area. The various calcite caves were in-land and in pristine condition, with a welcoming break from the hot weather and humidity. Some even draughted, but were so rife with calcite formations that I suspect pushing any continuations would come at a destructive cost.

Left: Otranto

<https://www.dropbox.com/sh/8hyqmejr5pgpnyf/AABUULGFRNmyursIDse1uDona?dl=0>



Pindale End Mine. 25th September 2022. Jack Lingwood and Jenny Drake

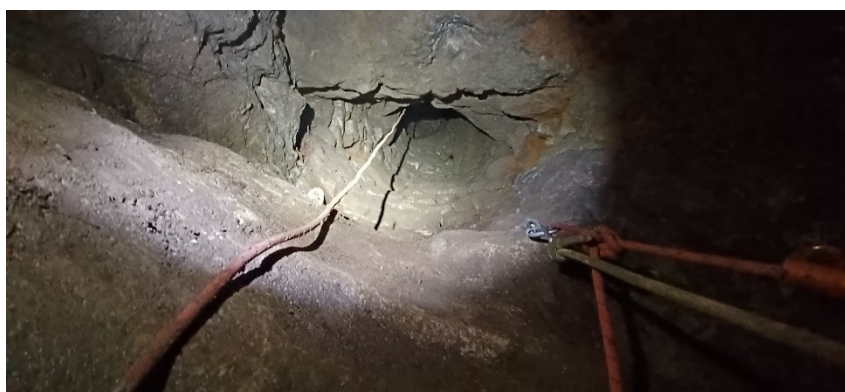
The DCA had replaced the caps on the two entrances to Pindale End Mine over the summer. There are some stainless through bolt anchors, as well as some old spit anchors in the mine. The scaff bar belays in the new shaft caps are DCA installed, but none of the other SRT anchors are, so DCA has not produced any rigging topos for the mine, as is their policy. A strong hint was dropped by the DCA projects officer to CCPC to take a look and see if we could produce one for the Rigging Guide.

We met up in Hope and drove over to Pindale Farm. Jack had contacted Alan Medhurst, the manager there and a caver of long standing, who had first opened up the mine. He was happy to let us park and even use the toilet/shower block to get changed. A top bloke! We were soon at the top entrance, as this was the more complex of the two for SRT. After applying our Derbyshire Key to the grill, we rigged off the scaff bar, with a back up to an adjacent tree.



Descending vertically for 12m there is a Y hang on stainless through bolts. From there, the shaft slopes slightly, to the base for another 12m or so. A careful climb down a loose drop for 2m enters a passage. Part way along, a passage joins, heading down and back towards the shaft. It ends with a traverse line and Y hang on spits and rusty hangers for a short shaft down to a mud filled base, with water running across it. The belief is that this is at sough level and a dig here could access the sough. There are a couple of spades at the base of the pitch, but Alan has not been able to persuade any one to dig it.

We returned to the surface. Jack managed to lean on the lid retaining chain while climbing out and dropped the lid on his head, seeing stars. Thank gawd for helmets! After measuring the ropes and producing a rough sketch, we walked the short distance to the lower shaft entrance. This has a magnificent ginged shaft (13 m),



with climbing steps built in. Unfortunately, the steps stop about 3m above the base, so a rope is necessary.

Right: Looking back up to the base of the Lower Entrance shaft.

From the bottom of the entrance shaft, a passage leads to a couple of stainless through bolts over another shaft (8 m). We rigged and descended this to find that the floor we had been walking on was a thin false one, held up by rotting wood and force of habit! There is a little bit of ore vein to see at the bottom. We carefully made our way up. There is a lot more mud in the lower entrance passages and I found my top jammer was unhappy gripping the rope. I eventually climbed the ginging steps, self-lining with my croll on the rope.

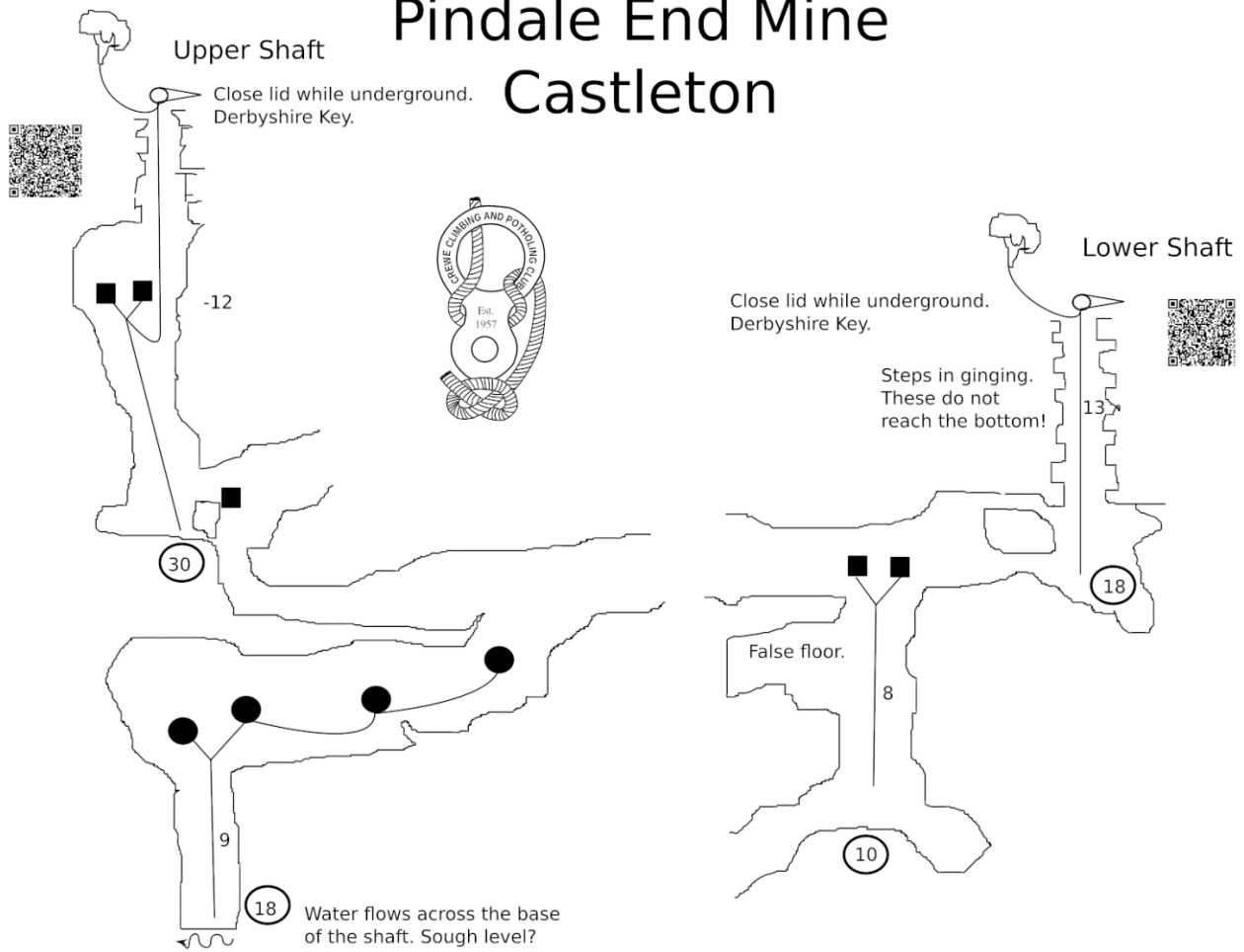


*Left:
It seems there are
a number of
places where 'DO
NOT TOUCH'
would be very
good advice !!!*

Our kit and the ropes will need some serious cleaning, but we now have a topo for this mine in the Rigging Guide. The mine is worth a couple of hours of your time. If you can get permission to park at Pindale Farm, you are right by the entrances. If they are too full up with visitors to let you park, then the narrow road will necessitate a longer walk in from where you can park without inconveniencing others.

Jenny Drake

Pindale End Mine Castleton



More of Jack's photos can be seen at:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/uLScyQGDpePxcAih7> <<https://photos.app.goo.gl/uLScyQGDpePxcAih7>>

A Caving Saga

Jenny Drake

On the UKCaving web forum, the pros and cons of various ways of recording caving exploration were being discussed. Among Facebook, club web sites, paper journals, caved stone, clay tablets and knotted string, I suggested the Norse Skaldic Saga format. Sung and spoken by a skald in a smokey hall, the words and deeds they espoused would stir the hearts of listeners and be spread far and wide through the land. A much more permanent record than ephemeral paper, ones and zeros, stone, clay, or string. I gave a quick example of the form it might take.

For the Newsletter, I've expanded and refined that example. For your pleasure, here is my account of a typical club trip to a Dales cave. Having composed one, I've decided that saga is the perfect form for trip reports and intend to use it exclusively from now on!

And yes, I am fully aware of the contradiction in expounding the beauty and permanence of the pre-literate, aural tradition saga using a paper and internet-based newsletter!

Bright was the day and light our hearts; we met at Inglesport to break our fast.
The new shiny in the hall below tempted us; we kept our credit cards sheaved.
Fry ups fortified us for the quest ahead; tea quaffed to slake our thirst.

We leapt aboard our land vessels; sails set for the moors.
We sailed the rolling land road; the troll realm appearing through the mist.

Home to Grendel and his Mother; land of sheep and grouse.

Riven by rushing water; far falling to caverns below.

Our navigator spied the lay-by; safe harbour for our vessels

Cold was the weather; unafraid we faced it.

Getting changed; we laugh at the goosebumps.

Neil searched for that he had left behind; forgotten at home.

Gear donned show mud and scars of trips past; reminders of our bravery.

The craven sought the smallest tackle bag, or hid from the choosing; mocked for their shirking.

The skulking cave hid from us; spread across the moor, we ran it to earth.

The first shock of water over the top of a boot; we entered the dark realm of Ælfheim.

Disdaining the rigging topo; the leader searched out the shining loops of steel.

Swooping down a thread of twisted line; the pitch vanquished.

Companions follow; eager for the world below.

Treasures of bright calcite abound; cunningly wrought by the underworld smiths.

At the gloomy sump, by the roots of Yggrrasil; we feast on bars of squashed chocolate.

Muscles groaning and joints cracking; we ascend to the light and warmth of Mittgard.

Rope stuffed in to tackle sacks; none shun the honour of hauling them.

Surface regained; in triumph we stride to our land vessels.

Our gear of caving dulled by mud; with new scars to show our valour.

Celebration in a local meadhall; foaming ale quaffed.

Our days deeds recounted; tales of great heroes told.

Now gone to Valhalla; caving by day and feasting by night.

Ralph the ancient; teller of tales and giver of short ropes.

Keith the valiant; always ready to venture.

Des the gentle; recorder of our deeds.

And many brave more; members of our band.

Down the long years; now gone beyond.

To hearth and home we return; happy and tired.

To heal and restore ourselves; eager for new deeds.

Saturday 10th September 2022. Alum Pot. Farewell to Des Kelly.

A few weeks ago, we lost much loved club member Des Kelly. Today, many family and friends made their way to one of his favourite caves to say farewell. From the lane in Selside, we walked up together to the Lower Long Churn entrance. Some carried on walking towards Ingleborough. Others descended via the Dollytubs pitches to congregate looking out over the sunlight and mist-filled Alum Pot. A few rigged down to the sump, where some of his ashes made a final caving trip. It was a bitter-sweet day for many of us.



Friends and Family of Des Kelly at Lower Long Churn. 10th September 2022.



Photos & text © Gareth Williams.

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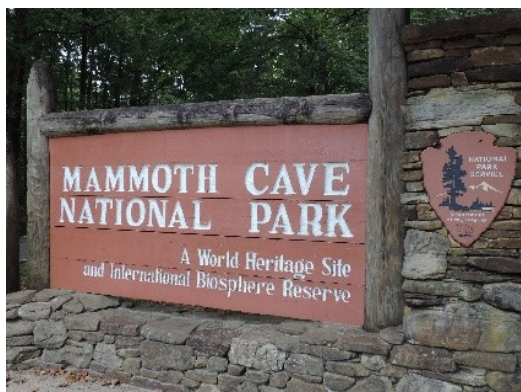
Sadly, it was impossible for some Club Members and friends to join the group that day, myself included, but this superb turn-out shows how greatly respected Des was, both as a club member, and as a friend.

Ed.

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There cannot be many locations that cavers would find quite as stunningly beautiful and atmospheric as this, looking out into the main shaft at Alum Pot.

Photo: © Gareth Williams.



MAMMOTH CAVE, KENTUCKY - the longest known cave system yet discovered in the world: 426 miles ! 22nd September 2022

Around about sixty years ago, when I was a teenager, I borrowed a book from the local library which inspired me to find out more about caves and cave exploration. The book was 'Caves of Mystery', by John Scott Douglas, published in 1957 [in 1994 I purchased an ex-library copy] - it was a kind of collection of cave exploration

accounts, beginning with a brief account of the Gouffre Berger [I was there in 1991 and 1995]. The second chapter described **Mammoth Cave**, and included the story of Floyd Collins and **Sand Cave**. These were places I never expected to be able to visit, but finally the opportunities arose.

During September, Annie and I were based with family, close to Baltimore in the United States, and on the map, our location seemed reasonably close to Mammoth Cave, so we set off on a 'road trip'. Two days, 700 miles, and four states later we arrived at Mammoth Cave National Park ! The approach was uninspiring - typical tourist motels, diners, and 'dinosaur-land' attractions - but once over the park boundary we were into 52,830 acres of unspoiled forest and river valley, with extensive visitor facilities (undergoing redevelopment to better serve the 500,000 visitors each year) and accommodation, grouped together close to the centre. We had two 'Sunset Terrace' rooms booked, and two tourist trips pre-booked (essential) for the day after our arrival - my efforts to make contact with local cavers for a proper trip had failed miserably.

There are tourist trips available every day, except Christmas day - usually a selection of about seventeen, but reduced to about five, out of season, when we were there, and mostly lasting a couple of hours, and costing about \$20 each. We opted for the **Cleveland Avenue** tour in the morning: 2 miles long, rated 'moderate', with 200 steps to descend, and the **Historic Tour** in the afternoon: 2 miles long, rated 'moderate', with 300 steps.

Background Geology: About 350 million years ago Kentucky was covered by a shallow sea teeming with life. Over millions of years the remains of dead organisms built up on the sea floor and eventually formed a layer of limestone and shale 700 feet thick. A Mississippi sized river from the north later deposited sand in its delta, covering most of the limestone, and forming an insoluble cap, which later still, was fractured by earth movements, allowing rainwater to penetrate the limestone, forming the cave passages. Meanwhile, the Green River was cutting a deep valley through the region, continually lowering the water table in the area, and resulting in five distinct layers of passages within the cave system, running beneath four sandstone surface ridges, and with only the lowest level carrying active streams, about 360 feet below the surface.





10.30 am. - Cleaveland Avenue Tour:

Everything about The National Park was controlled !! Our party of ticket holders were instructed by loudspeaker to assemble on seats under a roofed 'shelter', to be given a safety talk by a uniformed Ranger - with lots of 'Don't do this' comments, and threats of dire punishment for anyone stepping out of line, then we boarded our tour bus - bus ??? A ten-minute drive away from the Park Centre took us to another shelter beside a forest road, for a further talk, before a

metal door (the Carmichael Entrance) was unlocked to allow us inside. It was a relief to get into the lovely cool air inside, and then, straight away we were on a steep stairway down a driven passage - just like the entrance to Speedwell Cavern, but much more polished. We passed the base of a steep boulder slope - 'Rocky Mountains' - which was the original route in at this point, and then we were immediately into the 'Cleaveland Avenue' passage itself. No flash photography was



allowed, so getting any decent images was difficult. The passage was impressively huge, just stretching away into the darkness, with the super-smooth tourist path leading onward. Everywhere was dust-dry, with not a drop of moisture anywhere, and apart from the noise the group made, it was eerily silent - literally frozen in time. We had a minor drama when two party members had to be escorted out by our 'back-marker' ranger, as they were overcome by the situation ! Although we were forbidden to touch the cave

walls (really) or to remove even a single pebble, I inadvertently stumbled and discovered that the rock was much grittier than our Derbyshire limestone, with an orange dust coating the surface. Our guide led us on and on, following the tourist path along the elliptical passage, with breakdown material cleared to either side. There were no formations at all, although there were mineral deposits, and several areas were pointed out where visitors in the early 1800s had used candle flames to leave their names, with dates, in soot on the cavern roof. Close to the point where we turned back, there were actually restrooms



(toilets) built in a small alcove in the cave, and a nearby branch passage led to an elevator (lift) to the surface, although it wasn't in service when we were there. With his various anecdotes the guide made the trip an interesting experience, but it was rather too sanitised for anyone with a caving background. To be fair, 'it does exactly what it says on the tin', giving access for members of the public to part of an astonishing cave system, and I was pleased to finally get to visit.

Background History: Evidence shows that between about 4,000 years ago and 2,000 years ago prehistoric people explored up to 10 miles of Mammoth Cave, leaving remains of the burnt reed torches they used for lighting as they searched for crystals and salts. The cave was forgotten until European settlers came to the area in the late 1790s and it was rediscovered in about 1797, supposedly by a hunter named Houchin when he was chasing a bear [some accounts claim it was Hutchins, in 1799 – still chasing a bear].

There were large deposits of Saltpetre in the cave [*'false saltpetre' - calcium nitrate from soil and bat droppings, which could be converted into 'true saltpetre', Potassium nitrate*] and this proved vital for the manufacture of gunpowder for use in the war of 1812-15, where the United States forces fought against the British, eventually claiming an ill-defined victory ! The remains of the Saltpetre leaching 'factory' established inside the cave and worked by large numbers of slaves, is now included as part of several tours. After the war was over people started to visit the area to see the huge cave, with the first tours taking place in 1816.

The cave property was sold to Frank Gorin in 1837, and his nephew began a systematic search and exploration of the more obvious passages, eventually employing two slaves to continue the work and to guide visitors. One guide, Stephen Bishop, discovered many miles of previously unknown passage, and overcame many of the obstacles which had halted exploration in some areas, including the supposedly 'bottomless pit' which he crossed on a timber beam, or trimmed sapling, which he dragged into the cave. He also reached 'Echo River' in the lowest level of the cave, where blind, white cave fish were found - the first blind cave creatures ever discovered. Bishop died in 1859, and is buried near the cave entrance.



3.45 pm. The Historic Tour:

My second tour of the day started with a short walk from the Park Centre down to a Peak Cavern-type entrance, with a slope of tumbled boulders



leading down into it – the original, or ‘Historic’ entrance. We had the same safety rules / do not touch / no firearms (!) talk that I had heard earlier then we were led in through a massive steel door.

Above: *The Historic Entrance.* Right: *The Rotunda.*

A short distance inside we reached the ‘Rotunda’, a huge circular chamber about 140 feet below the surface, and the start of start of ‘Broadway’, where the Nitrate works were once established. Once again, there was not the slightest hint of moisture – everything was dust-dry.



The two-hundred-year-old remains of the vats and wooden pipes installed during the operation of the 1812-1815 Saltpetre leaching plant are well preserved in the dry, cool climate of the cave.



As before, in Cleaveland Avenue, the passage was



huge, but things were about to change !

The ranger held a briefing to warn us of the trials ahead – the passages would be small, so small you would have to duck your head in places, and then it would get really difficult – the notorious ‘Fat Man’s Misery’ - the only place where visitors to Mammoth could touch the walls, or rather, the walls would touch the visitors !

I expected something like Crabwalk in Giants for a short distance, but no – this passage was, well... - wide – wide enough to stroll through with an occasional sideways half-turn, and then we reached Great Relief Hall, where you could stand around in groups of twenty or more without difficulty, and (talking of relief) there were Restrooms in a side-passage, 280 feet below the surface.

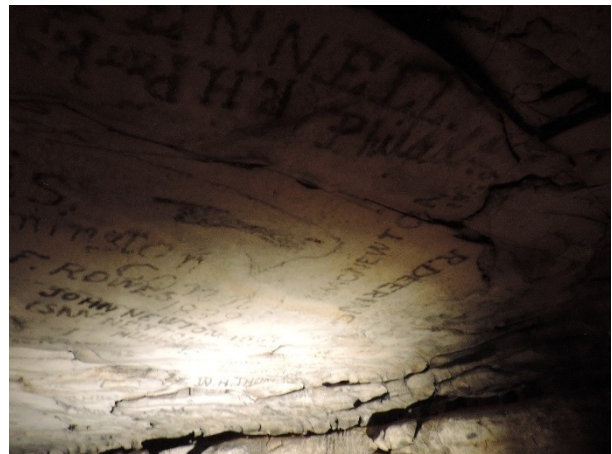




We next reached 'The Bottomless Pit' where the early guide had made a perilous crossing to penetrate further into the cave – we had a smart steel bridge over the hole which looked to be no more than about fifty feet deep. Just beyond, we passed a second fluted shaft – 'Side-saddle Pit'. It is difficult to keep track of the route we followed, but somewhere nearby we were shown a large area of roof with more early soot inscriptions – apparently the early guides would encourage visitors to add their names, for a small fee !



Left:
Sidesaddle Pit.



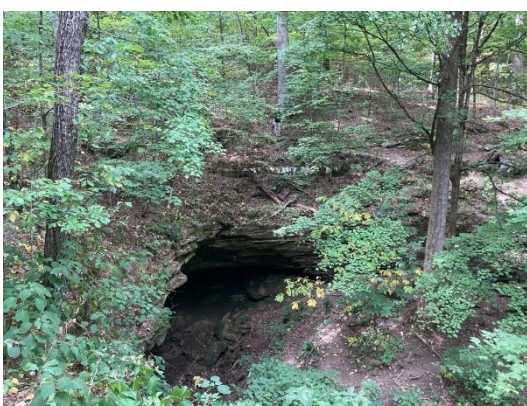
Right:
Inscriptions on the cave roof, made with candle soot by early visitors – many dated before 1850.

We had gradually lost height as we followed the tourist route, and, at this point we had to regain the upper level – this was done using what the guide called 'the fire tower', a steel girder construction which supported numerous flights of steps, up to 'Gothic Avenue', another huge, dry tunnel leading back towards 'Broadway' and our entry point.



White-nose Syndrome: Most cavers will be aware of this fungal disease which has spread through the eastern United States and Canada, causing the deaths of an estimated 5.5 million bats since it was first identified in 2006. The disease disrupts the bats when they are hibernating. It was first identified in Mammoth Cave in 2011, and by 2014 the bat population in the cave had declined by about 80%. We had this single specimen pointed out to us as we headed back towards the entrance. To avoid the risk of spreading the

disease, all visitors, on any of the trips, were immediately required to walk over a length of soaked biosecurity matting as they exited, to remove any spores or dirt from footwear.



Sand Cave: Only just inside the south-east boundary of Mammoth Cave National Park, a short board-walk trail led us through the woods to a platform above Sand Cave. This was the scene of a tragic event, with some similarities to the story of the death of Neil Moss in Peak Cavern, Derbyshire, in 1959.

With the increasing success of Mammoth Cave as a tourist attraction in the early part of the twentieth century, other landowners in the area began to search *Above: Sand Cave entrance from above..* for new caverns to open as a source of income.

One local man, Floyd Collins, was out hunting one day in 1917 and discovered a hole which led into a well decorated cave. He called it Crystal Cave, and his family enlarged the entrance, installed steps, and showed visitors around for a small fee. Not content with this discovery, Floyd continued to search the area, and in January 1925, he spotted another promising hole. Before exploring his find, he made a deal with the landowner, to share any profits if the cave turned out to be commercially viable. After a few warm days, and despite meltwater running into the entrance, Floyd crawled into the cave, with a single kerosene lantern for lighting.



Left: The low entrance arch to Sand Cave.

Only a short way in, the passage became quite constricted, but he forced his way onward. In the John Scott Douglas account, Floyd descended two deep pitches and found several well-decorated chambers, before turning back as his lamp began to flicker. All went well at first, as he headed out, but then, in one tight, flat-out crawl, he accidentally kicked and dislodged a mass of mud and stones which fell across his back and legs. He was unable to turn around to

clear the debris, in particular one rock which was trapping his ankle, so he was completely stuck.

Right: The low crawl inside the entrance.

For the rest of the day, and all the following night, he lay in the cold, wet passage, repeatedly calling out for help, then, early the following morning, a searching neighbour heard Floyd's cries. He raised the alarm, and soon afterwards rescuers arrived at the cave. The men attempting to rescue Floyd tried everything to pull him free, but they were unable to reach beyond his body, which was almost completely blocking the horizontal passage. A harness was finally fixed around his upper



body, and a team of men attempted to pull him free, but without success.

Left: Looking out of Sand Cave entrance.

Efforts continued, and once the story appeared in the newspapers, more and more people arrived at the site, travelling from all parts of the

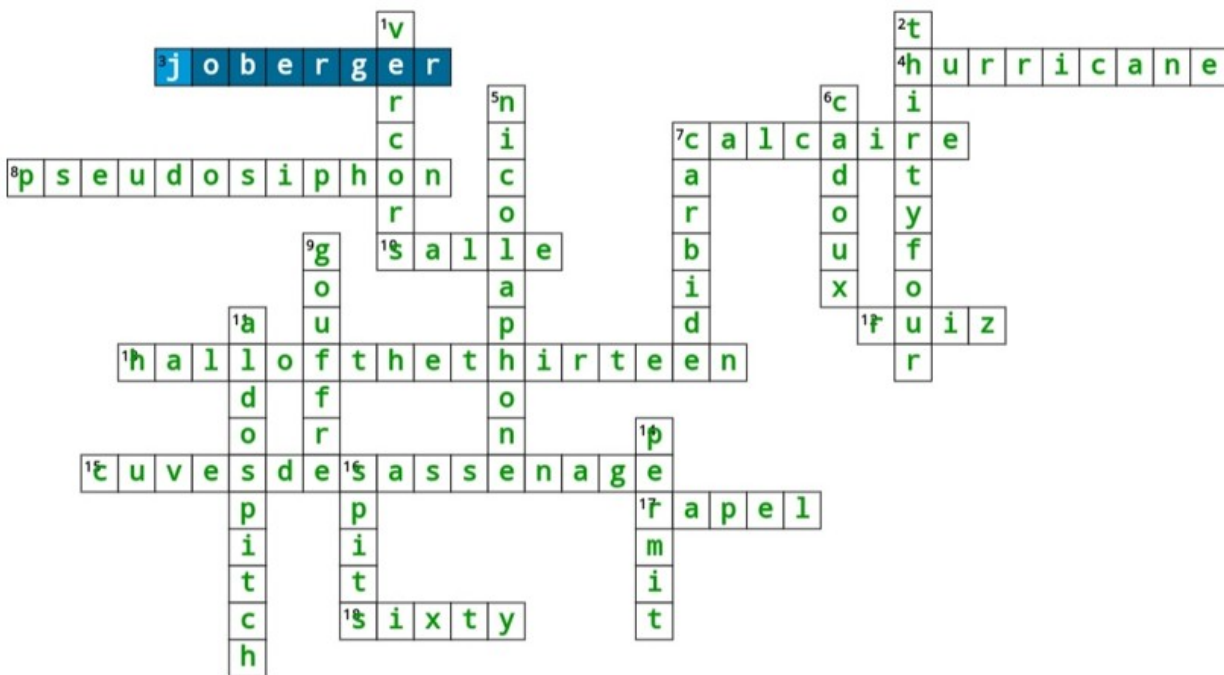
country. Outside the entrance it was chaos with the crowds, and



there were even stalls selling food and souvenirs. Eventually there were thousands of spectators, and the National Guard was called out to maintain order. A surgeon was called to attempt to amputate Floyd's trapped leg, but before he could even enter the cave, word reached the surface that the crawlway, excavated through rubble alongside Floyd, had collapsed, blocking access to him completely. Engineers were brought in to sink a shaft from the surface, about fifty feet from the cave entrance. They sank the shaft for fifty-five feet then tunnelled horizontally until they reached him, but by then he was dead, probably from exposure. It was the eighteenth day since he had become trapped, and the authorities then sealed the cave. Floyd's body was recovered months later, and was taken on tour around the country, before being returned to Crystal Cave for display. Later he was buried nearby in Mammoth Cave Baptist Church Cemetery on Flint Ridge:
'WILLIAM FLOYD COLLINS - BORN JULY 20 1887 - BURIED APRIL 26 1925 TRAPPED IN SAND CAVE - JAN 30 1925 - DISCOVERED CRYSTAL CAVE - JAN 18 1917 GREATEST CAVE EXPLORER EVER KNOWN'

Steve Knox

And now, the 'official' answers to the topical BERGER brain-teaser crossword - devised by Nicola Wellings:



Across

- 3. Who the cave is named after
- 4. Pitch that takes you to -1000m
- 7. Material that forms Caves (Fr)
- 8. To truly bottom, you must take a dip here
- 10. Chamber (Fr)
- 12. Pitch named after an early explorer who's ladder broke on his ascent
- 13. Iconic photos are often taken here just below camp 1
- 15. Where the resurgence appears
- 17. Abseil (Fr)
- 18. The decade the British conquered the cave

Down

- 1. The region of France the Berger can be found
- 2. Number of pitches to reach the bottom... before diving
- 5. The name of the communication system which must be used during the trip... unless you are French
- 6. the usually dry lake
- 7. Piles of this are around the cave, used from early lighting systems but now banned
- 9. A French pothole (fr)
- 11. Deepest shaft in the system
- 14. To be applied for prior to planning a trip
- 16. the French version of bolts

Well done to anyone who completed the crossword correctly - I failed on 5 down as I couldn't work out the 'phone' ending !!

Constructed and contributed by Nicola Wellings.

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My thanks, as always, to everyone who contributes to the CCPC Newsletter, with text, photos, additional comments, crosswords (!), etc., and also to those who acknowledge receipt afterwards - its good to know that each edition actually reaches the Members, and even gets read.

All errors, changes, or corrections are mine - my apologies. **Steve Knox, Editor.**