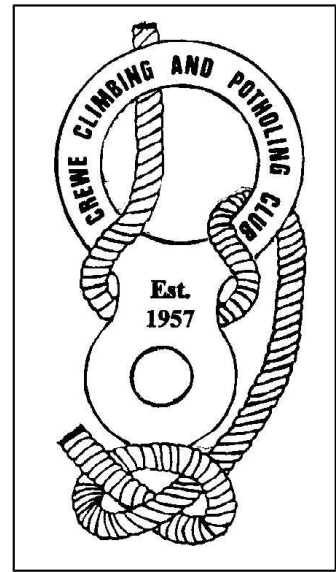


C.C.P.C. Newsletter 112 November

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Report on Peak/Speedwell Projects

not quite as busy a year as last year, but a certain amount of progress has been made, none-the-less.

NCC Shafts.

After last year's CCPC trip into the NCC shafts, there were reports that the second pitch of the "Down" route, which goes from the hanging rebelay to a Y hang at the end of the gulley, needed modification as some people had problems with it which could have had serious repercussions.

So, in December 2012, a group including Ade and myself, went in to see what the problem was, and also to look at some fossils and crystals which Ade said needed protecting with tapes. While climbing back up to The Balcony, Ann Soulsby inadvertently demonstrated the rigging problem very clearly. Her short legs weren't really up to the bridging technique needed to traverse the gulley, and she swung in towards the back wall, ending up bouncing up and down on the rope at the rear of the gulley, with the SRT rope making a very frightening 90 degree turn through her croll.

Fortunately, Ann is quite adept at sorting out SRT problems, and she managed to continue up the pitch safely, but it did indicate that some changes were needed to the bolts and rigging on that pitch. And so, on the evening of January 16,

2013, a group including (again) Ade and myself, but also with Lee Langdon (the original bolter) went in armed with drill, bolts, rope, hammers and Len's huge ammo-box battery (you know the heavy one with the 3-pin mains socket!!) - no joke when you consider the approach route. The upshot was sorted by Ade and Lee, and comprised a new deviation half way along the gully.

Since then, there has been another CCPC trip into NCC shafts, and reports are that the pitch still needs looking at. Ann Soulsby and I have this on our (ever increasing) to-do list! Watch this space.

Speedwell Work.

We've been doing lots of work for John Harrison - always useful this, as it oils the wheels which ultimately let cavers have continued excellent access to the whole remarkable system. Apart from fishing tourists' helmets from the Bottomless Pit lake, these jobs have included:-

- a) the installation of new pumps in the Bottomless Pit and at the Bung;
- b) the installation of a programmable colour LED lamp under the waters of the Bottomless Pit (clamping device was courtesy of Kirkham Enterprises);
- c) the replacement of light bulbs in the shaft above the Bottomless Pit viewing platform and replacement of light bulbs in the aven above the Bottomless Pit itself.

CCPC members involved in this work were Jenny, Roy and myself - but we also had occasional assistance from Ann Soulsby and Christine Wilson.

Boulder Piles Pipes.

Having replaced the various sections of pipe in the Boulder Piles with a single very long section, courtesy of DCA and Natural England, we now had the old shorter lengths of pipe to remove from the system. This work started several months ago with a trip in to look at the pipework and hydro-manifold (R2D2) in Leviathan by Christine Wilson and myself. On our way back to the canals, we managed to split one of

the unions, but couldn't get anywhere near the other two, and planned to return with lump hammers, and, maybe, blow lamps!

Returning with Ann Soulsby this December, we also managed to sort out a "faulty" Bung pump for John Harrison (tripped RCD!!) and look at the pipes on the way to viewing Henry Rockliff's bolting in Cliff Cavern (see below). We found the first pair of pipes floating near the gate of the Far Canal (where it still is, I'm afraid), another pair were located further up the Speedwell Streamway, and were secured (but not split) on the ledge where the passage comes in at roof level just downstream from the Boulder Piles. The third pair were split and removed to the TSG Chapel, where they are destined to fulfil a useful drainage role in a westward-heading dig at the base of the JH entrance shaft.

New Joint Effort Bolt Route.

Cliff Cavern is one of the more remarkable venues of the Speedwell system. A huge, abandoned vauclosian rising (just like Titan, Peak Entrance, Elizabeth, Block Hall and many other big shafts in the area) at the far reaches of the Speedwell system.

If you head upstream from the Boulder Piles, you cross the Blackpool Sands, pass the jaunty, wee ladder which accesses the Bathing Pool and you go beneath the Leaning Tower of Pisa - not many caving trips can boast this quality of sight-seeing! Just before you get to the famed Main Rising, a small inlet on the left beckons you up a climb to a long passage with antique (and contemporary) graffiti - including the world-famous Miner's Toast. The other end of this passage opens out into the colossal aven known as Cliff Cavern, and, up until December 2013, there were two fixed ropes heading up into the gloom.

On the right a rope led up to Cliffhanger. This rope was supplied by the keyholders in 2009 when Lee Langdon and friends rebolted the route. A 38m pitch leads to a rebelay which is followed by a 15m pitch to a traverse into Cliffhanger Passage. (A tatty old rope on spits leading up

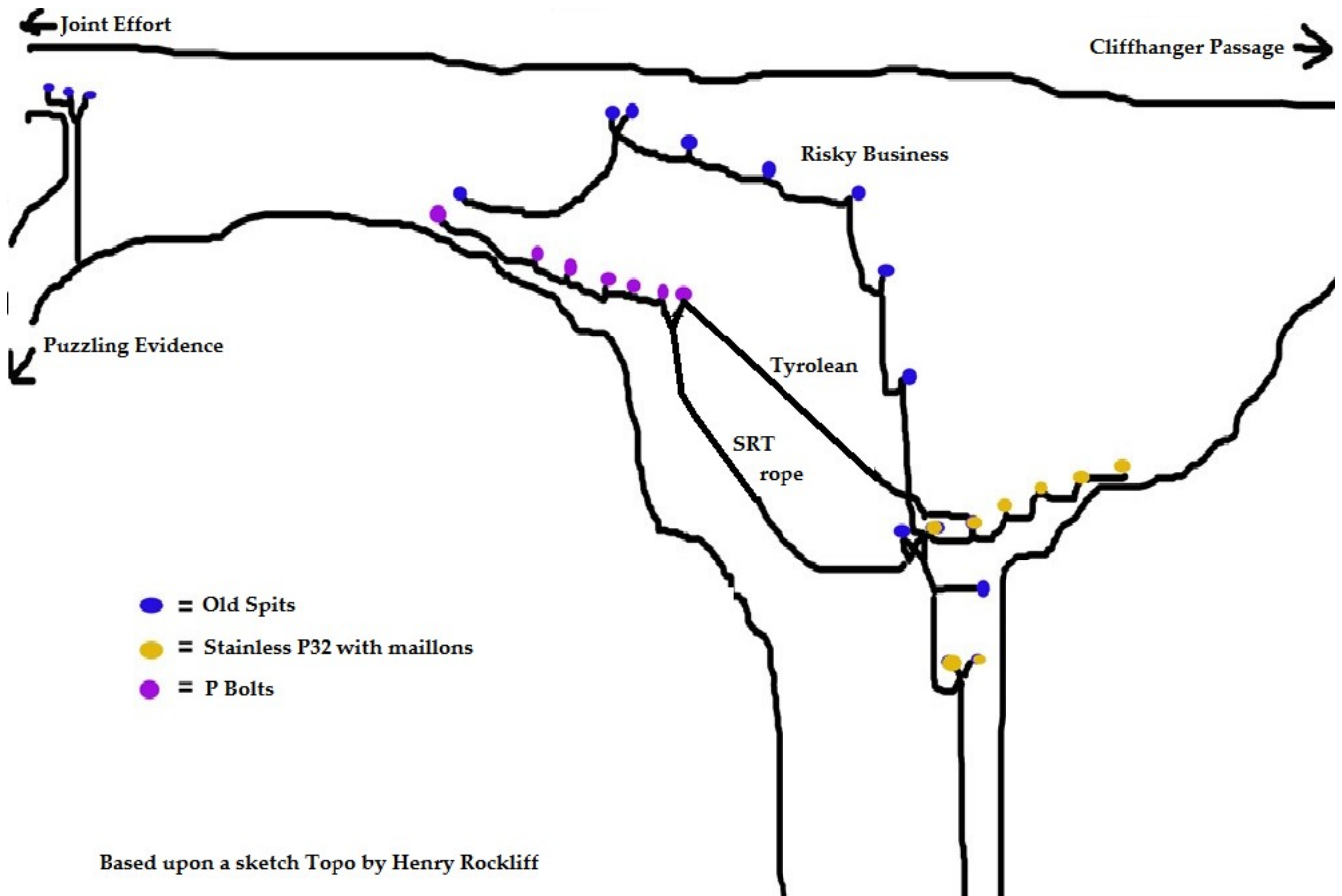
from the top of the 15m pitch is a route known as Risky Business - a traverse across to Joint Effort - see below.) There is another pitch with a fixed rope further along Cliffhanger Passage, before you reach the sump.

Back at the foot of the chamber, and back in time to pre-December 2013, there was a left hand rope which led upwards to another passage, Joint Effort. This rope was in fairly good condition, but the spits and maillons/krabs supporting it were quite corroded, last time I ascended this with Matt Jones and Christine Wilson - when Ralph was considering adding it to the rigging guide. (We decided against this partly because of the dangerous nature of the equipment, and partly because of the plan to rebolt it.) Since then, Henry removed all the rope and bolts, replacing them with a tyrolean and bolt traverse at the top of the main Cliffhanger climb.

This was what we were going to view on our pump-mending, pipe-splitting trip. However, on reaching the top of the fantastic Cliffhanger aven, I tried without success to cross the tyrolean. Although I've been up and down steep tyroleans in the Gouffre Berger, I have never crossed a level one before, and try as I may, I couldn't get the hang of it. When they arrived at the top of the rope, neither Christine nor Ann seemed keen to try, so they decided that there was time for a quick romp up to the end of Cliffhanger, while I set off back down the ropes.

I have since had the tyrolean technique explained by one of the guys who helped Henry to set it up, and also by Christine who has since been across it with Ade. Which just goes to show that you can teach an old dog new tricks, and, as Arnie says, I'll be back!

The sketch below isn't quite accurate - the tyrolean rope is more or less horizontal on the real pitch, and the top fixed rope pitch on the Cliffhanger route has been omitted.



28th December 2013: Clive Mine, Shropshire.

There was a good turn out for the Christmas holiday meet at Clive Mine, Shropshire [S] 51392386], with nine of us meeting up with the Shropshire Caving and Mining Club guys in a lane close to Clive Church.

The mine is in sandstone, and was apparently worked for cobalt and copper. The earliest confirmed record of mining activity at Clive is provided by the will of Thomas Spendiloves

in 1703, when he left his mine at Clive to his son John, however, as with many past mining operations, the records are incomplete and it is impossible to say when the first excavations took place. In other parts of Britain there is convincing evidence of the extraction of copper as long ago as the Bronze Age (eg. Great Orme, North Wales), and during the Roman occupation, but no evidence of such early working has been identified at Clive. This does not mean that there was no early mining here, as the very nature of later works is

likely to have destroyed any trace of such activity.

After 1703 there is a considerable quantity of documentary evidence recording changes of ownership of the mine, with some references to specific underground works, but this ends in 1869, when surface equipment was sold off to a mine in Wales, confirming that extraction of copper had ceased by that time.

Andrew Wood (S.C.M.C.) logged us in and recorded our BCA Insurance, then gave us a brief introduction to the mine and the nearby, surface structures. We were standing next to a long, stone building (closed and locked) which still contains an in-situ winding drum and associated machinery. This is over the main drawing shaft, which, in 1868, was deepened to below the lower tramming level, at a depth of 183 feet from surface, and then continued as a borehole, to create a well which still provides water for the estate (- it is now called 'Well Shaft').

Rather than climbing over the roadside wall we were directed up a trackway to a narrow path into the bushes, which then led down into a tunnel, known as 'the ladies walk', which took us under the road and into the adjacent woodland close to the mine entrance shaft. This is now

called 'Rubbish Shaft', as it was full of rubbish when re-opened from below in the late 1980s. A modern shaft cap has been installed, with a fixed metal ladder leading down about 6 metres into the mine.

We were each lifelined on the ladder, then followed (north) a gently descending sandy passage for a short distance into the beginning of a huge open stope. Immediately in front was the crumbling lip of a deep shaft, but a pair of traverse lines had been rigged across the right-hand wall to permit safe access across a ledge system to the continuing passage beyond. The crossing was supervised by S.C.M.C. guys, then we moved on through the base of the stope, beginning to get some idea of the main lay-out of the workings. The right wall of the level followed a major fault-line, while the roof, at times up to 8 or 10 metres above our heads, was pierced by a surprising number of shafts. It is possible that these were early workings, possible 'bell-pits', which were undercut by the later, eighteenth century workings. Everywhere the walls showed evidence of pick marks, the sandstone being relatively easy to work with hand-held tools.

Some distance further on the entire width and height of the passageway, probably about 3metres wide by 5 metres high, had been closed off with a

vertical wall of timber braced with heavy steel girders. Centrally, at the base of the wall, was the entrance to a concreted passage way which led into a stabilised zone beyond.

Apparently the rock in this particular area is less reliable than that previously passed through, resulting in a steady flaking off of parts of the roof. As the public highway passes over the mine on the ground surface directly above, this meant there was a serious risk of a major collapse into the workings. The County Council brought in a contractor to stabilize the risky area; a task achieved by blocking the main stope at two points and then filling the intervening space with approximately 1000 tons of 'grout', over a pre-formed access passage leading all the way through. The access route follows an odd, up and down pathway, complete with a fixed metal ladder in a vertical section.

Beyond the modern works, the stope continued equally impressively, with more shaft bases visible in the roof above, and a number of low arched passages heading off through the sides at right-angles. These passages were partially blocked by masses of sand, and despite crawling into several, there seemed to be no easy way through, so we assumed they

were abandoned trials which had been back-filled. No doubt the SCMC guys have fully investigated these.

The multi-hued orange and red sandstone walls in this section of the mine were amazing, displaying fantastic patterns of swirling and curving darker parallel lines. Jo tried to explain how these had been formed but I failed to take in more than the basics. Apparently it is all to do with minerals in fluids moving through the rock and the minerals being deposited due to various changes (I think it was 'dissemination' - not 'insemination' which John suggested !!).

Not far beyond the patterned walls we passed a couple of knotted ropes hanging down the right-hand wall from passages visible a few metres above, and then our progress was halted at the lip of a short vertical drop into workings visible below. The main passage, much diminished in size, continued beyond the drop, but without a traverse line to get across, or a rope to climb down the drop and out again, we decided to turn back.

Retracing our route, Paul and Jenny spent a short time investigating the low crawls at the top of the first knotted rope, the so-called 'Roman Levels', although there is no evidence to support this. This area is also reputed to have poor air quality. More crawls were squirmed up

and wriggled out of, and before long we were back at the main traverse-line near the entrance. While some waited their turn for the lifeline and went up to daylight, the rest of us went beyond the ladder into the short Southern Passage which terminated at the lip of another deep shaft down to the lower tramming level. There has been some recent stabilisation work here with a mass of concrete being inserted to prevent sand running over the edge into the shaft. It is possible to descend at this point, follow the lower route, and then return up the shaft below the traverse-line passed earlier. On the way back to the exit we passed a rising ramp on one side of the passage, leading to a built stone wall - this was the day-entrance, originally used by the miners as their main access route.

Steve Knox

We had spent an interesting couple of hours underground, exploring the main workings, and although initially 'guided', we were soon left to wander unattended, although crossing the exposed traverse line above a deep shaft, and use of the entrance ladder were still supervised. It was unusual to emerge completely dry, and relatively clean after a trip underground - such is the nature of Clive, dry and sandy !

Cavers: Alan Brentnall, Jenny Drake, Steve Knox, Mark Lovatt & Christine, Paul Nixon, Andy Platt, John Preston, Jo Wright.

Some background information taken from extracts of:
"Clive Copper Mine", by Neal Rushton (draft SCMC Account).
"Mining in Shropshire", by Geoff Warrington.



Post Script

During the trip, we spotted some old graffiti (dated 1907) on a wall at the end of the passage which heads West just beyond the traverse over a winze (see photo).

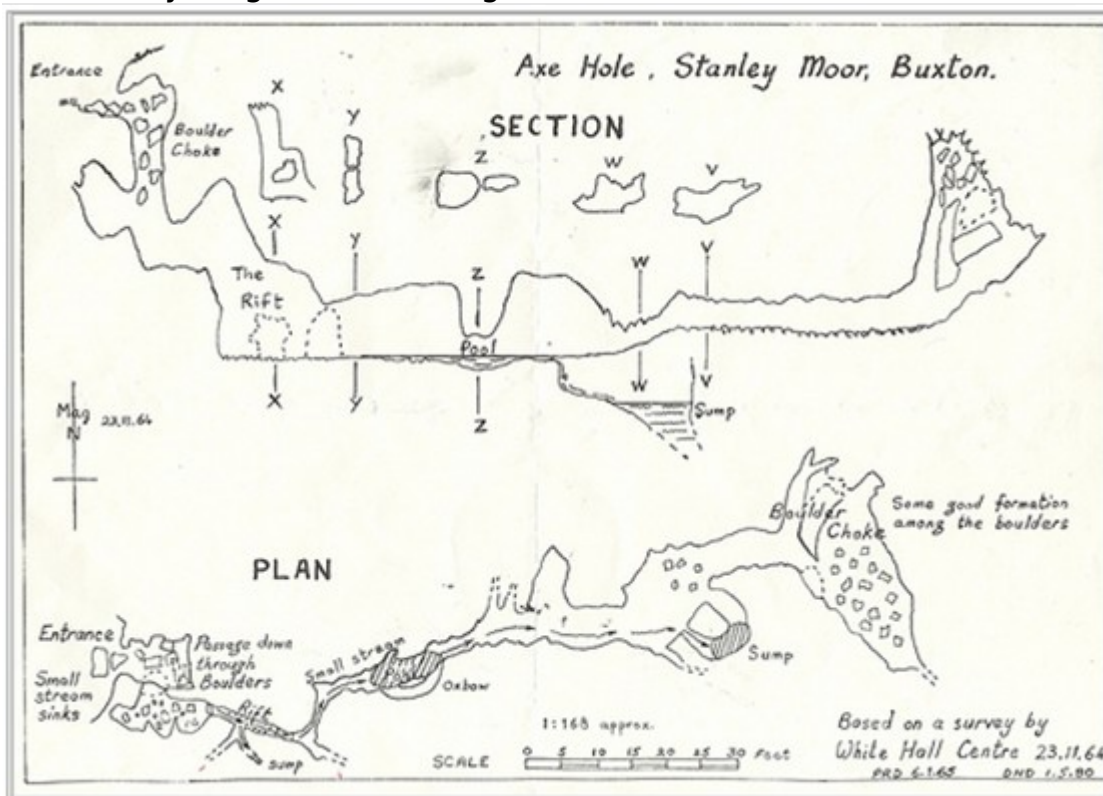
After a little research, I have identified two signatories; John L Hancock, Stone Quarry Master aged 37 at the time and possibly the owner of the mine. Edward Alexander Godson, b.1871 - d.1956 was the vicar of All Saints Church from 1903 onwards. The mine could be accessed from the vicarage and goes directly beneath St Mary's church!

Mark Lovatt

More about Axe Hole, Buxton

After the short article I put in the CCPC Newsletter No. 108 (March 2013) - 'A Grand Day Out' - I was recently looking on ukCaving.com (very unusual for me), and found a series of entries relating to Axe Hole.

Someone had asked if anyone knew of a survey for Axe Hole, and another contributor was quick to up-load a copy of a hand-drawn survey, produced by staff at White Hall Centre in 1964, when the cave was being used by the centre to introduce youngsters to caving.



The next entry really made me sit up. It was from Ralph:

'Axe Hole is an excellent little novice trip but the lower part of the entrance rift can be a little intimidating for some (especially overweight teenagers). I've used it countless times over the last 50+ years and although it can be wet at times both on the entrance pitch and the passage just beyond I've never found it "unpleasant".

It now connects with Plunge Hole but I don't recommend the thro trip for beginners (you may decide otherwise).

[The entrance pitch of Plunge Hole makes an excellent introduction to ladder and line.]

There are still a few formations you need to be aware of (with kids) and a rope is useful on the entrance pitch and on a few of the climbs -depending on the ability of the group.' October 28, 2012

There were several more comments about the possible connection, and one contributor added that in the late 60's, when he was 14, he used to catch the train from Manchester to Buxton to explore the caves of Stanley Moor. Ralph was quick to post his response:

"I can beat that! It was my first trip into a "real" cave in 1957, I'd been in Alderley Edge West Mine prior to that. Two of us caught the 'bus from Crewe then camped on the opposite side of the road below Solomon's Temple".

A local farmer pointed out the entrance - we were aghast, nothing like we expected (it was a lot smaller prior it being enlarged on a rescue)but we had an exciting day down there and in Plunge Hole. The stal was more plentiful in those days and "somewhere" I have a colour slide of a stalagmite we christened the "bleeding finger". Happy days".

October 29, 2012

There is more detail about the difficulty of the connection between Axe Hole and Plunge Hole in another 'post' contributed by 'Tim H.'. Tim describes how he and Kev Hoy attempted to dig the connection in the 1990's, but never made an actual link. Tim described dropping down the pitch in Plunge Hole, then following the stream into a body sized passage, to enter a tiny shaft where the stream sumped. A later survey loop showed that they were under a blocked shaft in the floor of the main chamber of Axe Hole. Another contributor (Nigel n) also mentioned attempting to dig through without success.

I remember a trip into Plunge Hole with Ralph on 11th February 1967 [47 years ago !!!]. We were interested in finding a possible connection with Axe Hole, and had been down both caves three weeks earlier, on 22nd January. Just after the bottom of the entrance pitch of Plunge Hole, I had noticed that, although most of the stream followed the base of the main rift passage, there was a very, very low archway at floor level on the right, and some water took that route. On this occasion, with the water level slightly lower, it was possible to scrape gravel out of the archway and build a small diversion dam which kept most of the water out of the side passage. Eventually I could squirm through the body-sized entrance, feet first, to reach a very low, 'mini-chamber', where there was just about room to turn round. Ralph joined me, and we examined the route ahead. The passage constricted to another body-sized tube, and, as our entry had destroyed the temporary dam, the stream was back with us, and was flowing into it. It was tight, but I could reach a point where the water was disappearing over a sharp edge, and I could look down into a tiny round shaft. This had to be feet first, so I retreated, turned round again, and wriggled backwards to the shaft. It took considerable contortion, but eventually I was standing in the shaft, looking back along the tube to where Ralph was lying in the water. The furthest progress I made was to get down on my knees, with my feet pushed into a bedding plane continuation. As I struggled to get back out, Ralph was attempting to block the water, but even so the stream was pouring over me, and I was beginning to feel distinctly frightened. Obviously we both got out OK, and, back in the daylight, we decided that we were never going back. We never did, but it looks as if our attempt was about 30 years before the attempt by Tim & Kev (above).

The current edition of 'Caves of the Peak District' states:

Axe Hole: tight connection with Plunge Hole.

Plunge Hole: tight connection with Axe Hole.

I would be interested to know if the route we explored is the actual way of the connection, and, more than that, I would be very interested to know if anyone has actually passed from one cave to the other - in other words, physically connected them.

Steve Knox.15th November 2014

AXE Hole, near Buxton, Derbyshire.



Marguerite Johnson crossing the 'sump pool' in Axe Hole.
(Just marked 'Pool' on the survey.)

Steve Knox



Marguerite Johnson in the Stalactite Grotto in Axe Hole.

22-01-1967



Ralph Johnson in the bottom of the main rift passage in Axe Hole.
Photos taken on 22nd January 1967 by Steve Knox

The End-to-End that nearly Ended at the Start

I'm not too sure when I first got the idea. Certainly it was before I read "Wild Trails to Far Horizons" which briefly mentions a Rucksack Club member riding the route. But it was only this year when I was doing so much less running, because of various injuries, that I realised that, not only did I have the time to do it, but that, if I didn't do it now, maybe I would never do it? But there remained two questions: could I do it. and did I really want to?

Day 1

Mainland UK stretches from somewhere up in far North East Scotland to somewhere way down in the far South West of Cornwall. Traditionally recognised as John O'Groats and Land's End, respectively, these points are certainly open to debate, for Dunnet Head is further north than John O'Groats, and the Lizard is further south than Land's End. Whatever ... you've got to start somewhere!

I chose Duncansby Head, which is the furthest North East bit of our island. Chosen because it is a beautiful location, much less tourist-infested than John O'Groats, well endowed with sea stacks, geodes, arches and seabirds (though not in October) - and a really good place to park the camper van. What's more, you can set off from Duncansby head and still call in at John O'Groats on your way south with hardly any deviation. What's not to like?

The morning broke mistily as our automatic lighthouse neighbour dowsed its lamp for the day, the sea crashed noisily against the cliffs below and I ate my porridge with more than a little trepidation. "A journey of a thousand miles begins with a single turn of the cranks," said Chinese philosopher Lau Tzu, long before bikes had been invented. I had decided to ride my bike for more than a thousand miles, to travel from one end of my homeland to the other under my own steam, to see and hear and smell the countryside, to take a journey I had wanted to make - feared to make - for far too long.

Could I do it? Or would I fall foul of injury, lack of will and commitment or mechanical failure? Would I be plagued by bad weather? Would I get lost? Could I do enough miles each day to make this journey possible?

I didn't want to break any records, but I had only so much time in which to make my journey. You see, Alison and I needed to be in Patterdale to help with the Ian Hodgson Mountain Relay on October 6th, and we also needed to be in Llanberis on October 20th as I was a sub for the Pennine team, and we also needed to be home on October 28th when we'd booked tickets to see the Peatbog Faeries in Sheffield. This gave me just enough time to make the journey, but adding in the Llanberis bit meant it had to be a North-South journey, and it also increased the mileage from around 900 miles to 1200 miles.

I had spent weeks working out a good route which avoided the worst of the busy main roads and cities, included some of the nicest parts of the countryside and allowed us to spend the evenings in pleasant surroundings. All this was important because, while I was pedalling away, Alison would be driving the camper van, having a parallel holiday of her own - not supporting me like the Sky team car, handing bottles of drink on the move, but doing her own thing and, simply, meeting me at the end of each day.

My first day would take me along the north coast of Scotland, through Thurso and over to Betty Hill, before turning south and travelling down Loch Naver to a spot where we could "wild camp" in the van overnight. This would be our fourth "wild camp" in a row, as we'd already had similar nights near Brotherswater, in Glen Feshie and, of course, at Duncansby Head. The weather for my proposed first day wasn't too bad - low probability of rain, even a possibility of sunshine. With such planning, and such a forecast - what could possibly go wrong?

The sickening, scraping crash as the bike went over and landed on the tarmac made me jump. I'd just been saying cheerio to Alison, when a slight gust of wind had nudged my bike. Gingerly, I picked

up my steed, my pride and joy - a ten year old Bianchi Pro 105 road racer in Marco Pantani's very own celeste and yellow colours - and looked closely at it. With a sigh of relief, I realised that it looked OK. I'd got away with it.

Time to go then! I jumped on the bike, made that very first turn of the cranks and shot down the hill towards the Bay of Sannick, where, only the day before we'd seen no less than 24 mother and calf seals swimming and playing in the inshore waters. Passing the level part of the road opposite the beach, I shifted the gears onto a larger sprocket and started to climb the next hill ... but nothing happened! Worse, my cranks froze, refusing to turn. I looked down at my slowing bike, and saw, with horror, that my rear derailleur was now pointing upwards at a crazy angle, almost leaning in to the delicate spokes of my rear wheel!!

Quicker than I've ever done before, I released the cleats on my pedals and stood down from the saddle, skidding on my feet to a stop, before any more damage could be done. Lying the bike down, I looked at the mech, and the reason was obvious. The cast alloy hanger which connects the derailleur to the rear dropout must have been badly cracked in the earlier fall, and had finally shattered once the pressure of the downward shift had been applied and ... well, that was that.

I think the word the footballers tend to use in these kinds of situations is "gutted". I had hardly started my journey and it was all over - or was it? Could I possibly get another hanger somewhere up here in Scotland? By now, Alison had arrived in the camper van and we started to look for bike shops while travelling towards Wick, the nearest town of any size. Several phone calls and three bike shops later, and I was talking face to face with a mechanic in the only Bianchi dealership in the North of Scotland. The type of hanger was no longer used on current Bianchi bikes, and it was no longer stocked by dealers. It could be ordered, but that could take a couple of days. And there were no suitable second hand bikes. "But I can

give you a good discount on this rather nice Via Nirone C2C Tiagra model ... “

And so, at 5pm on Tuesday October 8th, after much deliberating and discussion, after 200 extra road miles in the camper van and after purchasing the most expensive mech hanger on the planet, I was back at John O’Groats sitting astride a new bike, ready to make that first turn of the cranks for the second time. A mere eighteen miles later, and I had completed my first day’s cycle and we camped on the coast road near Wick, just by the old castle. And I was still very apprehensive about the rest of my long journey.

Miles = 18



Day 2

You’ll have worked out by now that my small journey yesterday hadn’t followed my planned route along the north coast to Glen Naver. This was because I didn’t want to lose a whole day, and so I opted for the more direct and shorter route down the A99, and then the A9, and changed the destination from Inverness to Dingwall, bringing the expected mileage down to a manageable 96 miles. Manageable? The furthest I’d ever cycled in my life was just over 50 miles - was this really a good idea?

Well, not when you looked at the forecast for Wednesday October 7th which was terrible - very strong south-westerly gales gusting to 70mph with intermittent heavy showers. And which way would I be travelling? Errm ... south west ...

The A99 is a mighty A road in Caithness, but, in Caithness, as you'll gather if you look in your road atlas, they don't actually have that many roads. The A99 is the best they've got up there, but, if you put it anywhere around Manchester, it would be a B road ... or possibly even worse. It's narrow, it's hilly, and, because it's the best way for lorries to go, it's pretty busy. Well it wasn't actually as busy as I feared, but it was covered in surface water by the regular "intermittent heavy showers" so that, whenever one of these juggernauts hurtled towards me I was hit by a powerful bow-wave, which knocked me sideways, and simultaneously, I was sluiced by a real wave of water which was carried along by the airstream. And this happened time after time after time.

But the most frightening part of the day was crossing the Dornoch Firth road bridge, a mile and a half of bridge work which connects Clashmore with Glenmorangie in a North South direction. The wind at this point had swung around to the north west, and was blowing even stronger than it had all day. No longer a head wind, it now pushed me from behind and slightly towards the sea to my left. The sea itself was a white mass of foam, and the combined din of both the sea and the wind was terrifying. But worse than that, despite applying my brakes as much as I dared, I couldn't manage to keep the speed below 25mph! White-knuckled and scared, I hung on as best I could until I was finally across and going past the distillery. I stopped in Tain, and would have gladly lit up a B&H if I still smoked!

By contrast, my route from Tain to Dingwall, along NCR1 through Alness, was idyllic. But I was tired and glad to finish when I reached the campsite (yes, a proper one, with showers!!). Could I possibly keep this up day after day?

Miles = 96, brings total to 114

Day 3

The second part of the plan to recoup the lost day entailed cycling up Glen Convinth and over the top to Drumnadrochit. And what a

delightful road this is too! And, to make it even nicer, the sun itself made the odd appearance ... between showers. On the downside, once into the Great Glen, I had to make do with travelling along the A82 - a busy road, difficult to avoid and blessed with some of the worst surfaces to cycle on that you will ever meet on a trip from Scotland to Cornwall.

But once Spean Bridge is in sight, other opportunities arise, and the A82 can be abandoned for either the beautiful back road from Gairloch to Banavie or the wooded lanes to the east of the River Lochy which take you nicely around to Torlundy and thence onto the cycleway into Fort William. I chose the latter, meeting up with Alison, as well as Ambleside's Steve Woods and his faithful dog, Luna, at the Glen Nevis Campsite.

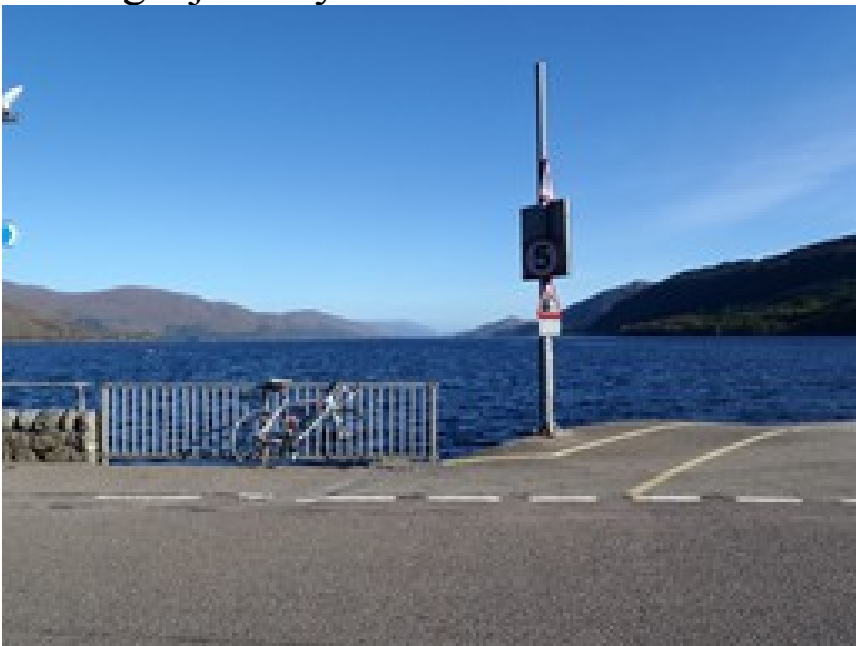
Miles = 80, brings total to 194

Day 4

As forecast the night before, I was blessed with beautiful weather and a freezing temperature as I said goodbye to Steve and Alison and cycled into Fort William to catch the 10 o'clock ferry across Loch Linnhe to Camusnagaul. This was another attempt to evade the dreadful A82, and it is certainly worth the trip. The chaps running the ferry were extremely friendly and we chatted about my journey as they carefully lashed my bike to the deck above the passenger galley before the tiny vessel chugged its way across the loch, calling briefly to deliver a few cans of coke to a man who was working on a dredger anchored in the middle.



Waving goodbye, I set off down the deserted single track road which weaved a very pleasant route down to Corran Narrows. The views back to Ben Nevis were excellent, and the many different wading birds and other wildlife made me really appreciate why it was worth making a journey like this one.



Alan Brentnall ...to be continued!

CCPC History

Why is the study of history important?

What is history?

There are many definitions of history, but here are a few of them:
The Oxford Dictionary: History is the branch of knowledge dealing with past events.

Wikipedia: History is the study of past events, particularly in human affairs. History is a continuous, typically chronological, record of important, or public events, or of a particular trend, or institution.

What is the point of studying history?

There are many important reasons for studying history. The main one, in my opinion, is for information about how and why we have become what we are. Secondly, history enables us to learn from the successes and mistakes of the past. Churchill reckoned that it provided a sense of identity, of our distinctive position and character. He also thought it provided a sense of brotherhood. The answers to this question depend on one's point of view and who posed the question. It is rather like answering the typical layman's question; 'Why go caving?'

Why are these questions in the CCPC Newsletter?

We need to write our club's history. We need to define our chronology, activities, key events and people for future members.....
What do you think?

John Gillett