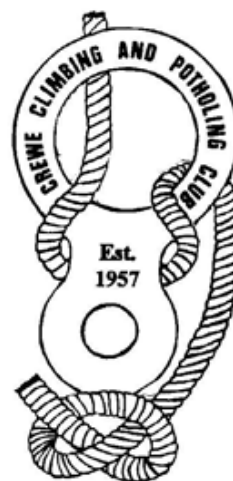




C.C.P.C. Newsletter 130. February 2022 to March 2022

Log on to
www.ccpc.org.uk

Editor: Steve Knox
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Editorial:

Covid – really that is enough said ! On and on it goes, with one ‘wave’ or variant after another, but, even so, life goes on too, and caving continues, as and when possible. Members are making their own decisions about what is safe and what they are prepared to do, and it looks as if that will continue for some time. Our Members are still enjoying trips out, both underground and on the hills, and that is as it should be. Monthly CCPC meetings are continuing via ‘Zoom’ as ‘The Red Bull’, in Butt Lane, has been temporarily closed on Mondays, but we hope that will return to normal eventually. We have decided that members ‘attending’ via Zoom can vote for (or against) proposals, as if they were actually present – as long as they are visible on screen at the time ! Hopefully all last year’s Members have chosen to renew their Membership subscriptions and Insurance for 2022, and can continue to join in with, any activities of the club. It is really good to see a few new faces joining us on Club meets.

Steve Knox February 2022.

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Many thanks to those who continue to share accounts of their adventures, and their amazing photographs, with the rest of the club membership. It is greatly appreciated.
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Planned Club Meets, etc.:



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:

2 nd Jan. 2022	Moorfurlong Mine, Bradwell, Derbys. Alternative: Carlswark Caverns	10 Members attended Moorfurlong Mine.
10 th Jan. 2022	A.G.M., followed by the January Meeting.	‘The Red Bull’, Butt Lane, near Kidsgrove was closed, so the Meetings were held by ‘Zoom’, starting at 8.30 pm..
15 th Jan. 2022	New Goyden Pot, Nidderdale, Yorks. Alternative: Hagg Gill Pot	S.R.T. trip. 5 Members attended New Goyden Pot.
30 th Jan. 2022	Poacher’s Cave, North Wales. Alternative: Maskhill Mine, Derbyshire.	Electron ladder, or rope for entrance. Alt.: Deep S.R.T. trip. 9 Members attended Poacher’s Cave.
	The February Meeting.	As ‘The Red Bull’, Butt Lane, near Kidsgrove, remains closed, the Meeting, starting at 8.30, will be held using ‘Zoom’.
	Brightgate Cave, Matlock, Derbyshire. Alt.: Cumberland Cavern, Derbyshire..	Interesting complex maze of joints and bedding cave passages.
	Ashford Black Marble Mines, Derbys.	Easy mine – extensive pillar & stall work.
	The March Meeting.	‘The Red Bull’, Butt Lane, near Kidsgrove. 8.30 pm., and also by ‘Zoom’.

	Link Pot - Serendipity, Easegill, Yorks. Alt.: Mistral Hole, Easegill, Yorks.	Tight entrance. Serendipity pitches can become impassable after heavy rain.
	Peak Cavern, Derbyshire. Alternative: Giants Hole, Derbyshire.	Fee payable. Various routes. Alt. £3 fee payable.
Limited privately organised activities take place as, and when, permissible, complying with current government restrictions. Some members are still having to self-isolate or 'shield' during this period.		



Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation:

DCRO team members continue to be ready to assist whenever required, throughout the present period of the pandemic, and will use PPE, where appropriate.

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



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club: 2nd January 2022. Moorfurlong Mine & caverns, Bradwell, Derbyshire. [SK 1678 8119]

See: Newsletter No. 129 for write-up and photographs.



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club: 15th January 2022. New Goyden Pot, Nidderdale, Yorkshire.

Dan Baddeley, Jenny Drake, Des Kelly, Mark Krause, Rob Nevitt, Steve Pearson-Adams.

Early starts, all round, for the six who made the journey up to Pateley Bridge for the trip into New Goydon; a first for all except Des who last visited the system about 10 years-ago with Gill. So it was we met up in the village only to find out from Des and Mark, who had been waiting for us, that the Old Granary Cafe was closed. Luckily, the Wildings Tearooms was open for business. After fuelling up on some nice breakfast nosh, and assorted coffees and teas we headed back to the car park. While we had been in the café, 'Barney the Van' decided to creep off the hand brake and began edging itself across the car park. Fortunately for me 2 guys had stepped in and saved the day, saving Barney from rolling into the wall opposite. Disaster averted we made our way up to Scar House Reservoir for a look at this impressive example of Victorian engineering then we headed back down the valley, found our parking area (thanks to Des) and got kitted up.

Passing what we now know was Thrope Edge Pot; the alternative entrance to New Goydon we located the New Goyden entrance and rigged the 2 pitches landing in the middle of the river a short distance downstream from the upstream sump. Like Manchester Hole and Goydon, New Goydon displays signs of flood debris high up in the roof serving as a reminder to just how much water the system can take. Downstream we met an inlet on the left which after an easy climb up levelled out to meet a short canal of very cold and deep water. We quickly made the decision to leave this for another day when the wet suits are packed. Back at the river we continued downstream to meet another inlet whose entrance was heavily silted. The upward slope was a simple climb with some shattered blocks on the right and a disappearing trickle ahead and left of centre. Mark (aka, 'it doesn't go anywhere') said wait for it, "it doesn't go anywhere" however Jenny and Dan proved that there was a route through the boulders into a good-sized chamber known as the Planetarium.

Dan and Jenny now had the smell of the hunt and forged ahead in search of caves measureless to man. Alas it was not to be as taking the right turn when meeting the T junction at the back of the chamber led them through to a short drop then a stoop and rift passage which bypasses the middle downstream sump and re-enters the river. Following downstream here one soon meets sump number 3. Back at the T junction Rob and I went left following this joint like passage through a couple of pools until we reached a 12-foot-deep pit with a rope backed up to a 'not-so-confidence-inspiring' natural. Not wanting to chance it we headed to join Mark and Des back in the Planetarium. Oh, I should mention the in-situ rope hanging from the right wall as you approach the T- junction. I didn't notice this going in but went up it on the way back. It rises to a re belay 20 feet from the floor then continues up the aven for another 30-ish feet, but not being able to see where or how the rope was secured I retreated and joined the others.

Dan guided some of us over the greasy slabs against the right wall of the Planetarium, protecting us from an awkward drop to the floor below, and soon we were all back in the river and the 3rd sump. We then retraced the route Dan and Jen had taken initially, looping back into the Planetarium, and then heading back up stream. Passing our ropes we soon met the upstream sump.

Des reminded the group of a conversation he had with Alan Brentnall: Alan telling Des the sump had air space, which today it appeared to have, but none of us wanted to test it [SEE BELOW]. On the way out I had a look at a narrow inlet on the right which after 50 foot popped out into a small chamber with water falling down a series of blocks with a knotted handline giving access to passage above. Dan had followed me up and was first to make his way up the rope, while I was asking, 'does it go anywhere?' Silly question really as there was a good draft and cool fresh air wafting down. Dan shouted back "I can see daylight". We had unknowingly found ourselves at the bottom of Thrope Edge Pot, so after a careful climb up the 20-foot scaf-lined hole, we popped out into the daylight. Mark, Des, Jenny, and Rob who derigged were soon out via New Goydon. A great little trip and well worth a return visit. Thanks to everyone for making the day another to remember.

Steve Pearson-Adams

Alan Brentnall responded:

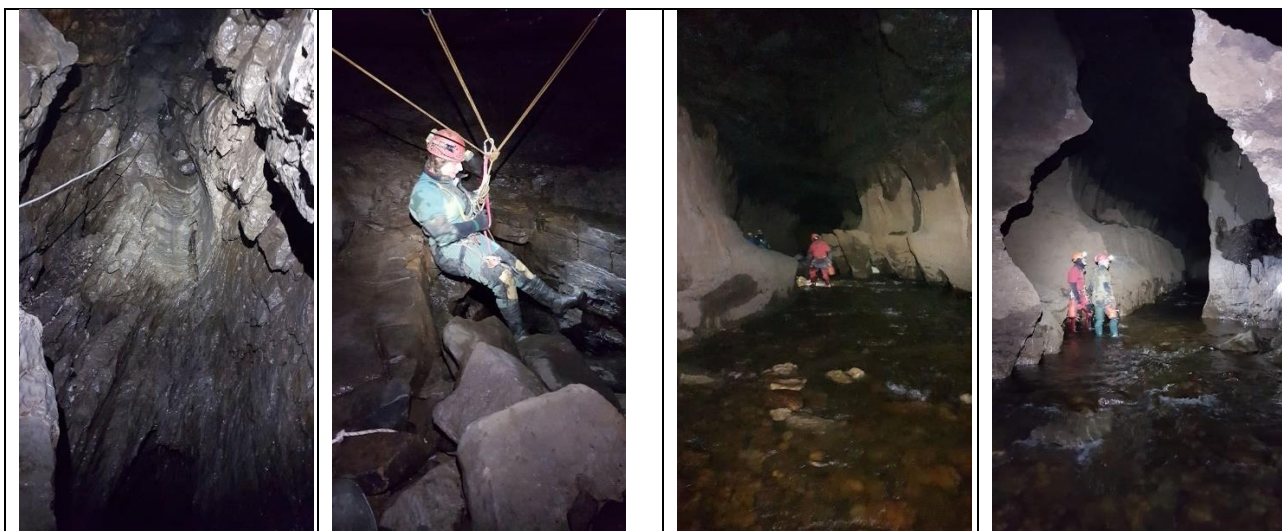
Just to clarify, before somebody drowns at some future date, the only low-airspace duck I can remember from my trips into New Goyden were the ducks in 'Hardy Boys Passage'. I think what Des may be thinking of is the low-airspace duck through to the old final sump chamber in Manchester Hole - now the Goyden connection.

Glad you found the Planetarium - I know a few who've missed that in the past.

It's a while since I've caved in Upper Nidderdale. I understand, from a lad I know who is both a Yorkist and TSG, that the Black Sheep diggers have made a few changes up there!



Des shared some of his photographs from the trip into New Goyden Pot – sunshine, and lovely clean washed limestone !



The superb second pitch dropping down to the river in its huge passage. Really nice rigging.



Dan, just wondering if he really wants to get that wet !

All photographs courtesy of Des Kelly.

Des' photographs can be seen at: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/29teU8oL71CKGqQS7>

24th January 2022: Middle Engine Mine, Hassop Common, Derbyshire.

Gaz Mcshee – solo.

Following my failure to get into Middle Engine Mine on Hassop Common last week, due to the 55m rope I took being too short, I returned with a 65m rope borrowed with thanks from the club's inventory, to finish what I'd had started.

8.00 am on a chilly, and very foggy, morning saw me climbing up to the mine's adit entrance, beneath a very large tree. A strong draft blows through the entire mine so for once there was no respite from the cold once inside, and, without hanging about, I made short work of the entrance crawl. After clipping into the in-situ rope for safety at the pitch head, I rigged the pit,



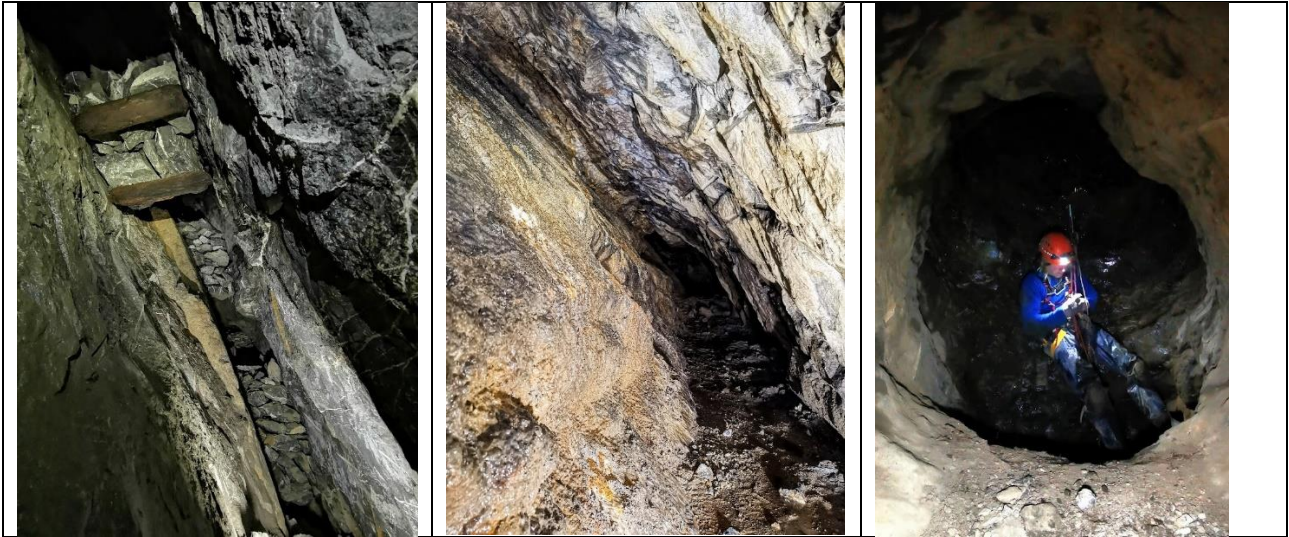
and to save an unnecessary 'drop and climb out' this time, I lowered my bag first to test for the bottom, which I hit with about 6m of rope left. So much for the estimate of 47m I had read during my preparation for this exploration. The amphitheatre at the end of the entrance crawl is an impressive place, with workings going off it on the opposite side of the pit. There is an in-situ traverse line fixed up, on hangers on 10mm expansion bolts, all of which are pretty sound. The rope however is best ignored and re rigged using your own rope. The traverse leads up and right, at the top of an awkward sloping climb which would certainly end badly - very, very badly, if you were to slip. Up above, the shaft continues to the surface, and top-lights the space with a dull ambiance, enhancing your own light beautifully.

The pit is definitely the main attraction here; it's big, it's colourful, it's lit from above, and it's deep. It passes more workings about half-way down, then, as you catch sight of the pit bottom, your heart jumps a beat, as you spot the railway lines poking up into the shaft, waiting to impale anyone unlucky enough to make a mistake.

The pit bottom gives access to a stope working, blocked by infill, to the right, but also giving access to a further workings accessible from the shaft a little further up from the base. To the left from the base of the shaft, things get bad really quickly ! The stope slopes at a steep angle making movement awkward, and it's narrow, just about big enough to pass, and above is filled with stacked deads, almost all unsupported after their stemples rotted away in years gone by.



The deads that had not collapsed to the floor were only held in place by magic, and after a short time the seriousness became so bad that I turned round and got out. Not a place to be on your own !



All photographs courtesy of Gaz Mcshee.

Back at the shaft, the short but very steep climb up to the further workings, ends at a hole through a collapsed false floor, again a reminder of how unstable the place really is. The passage opens up to stooping size, and passes several offshoots filled to the roof with stacked deads, and also a couple of climbable stopes, although again, not a place to be going into on your own. The end of the passage suddenly becomes a plankway, and here it is particularly good, with enough room either side to cross it without having to damage this bit of history. Again there are more stopes at really steep angles, with steep climbs up, and crazy amounts of stacked 'deads' held up by who knows what, and more piles of 'deads' on the floor, who's luck had run out. The culmination of all this was a very low crawl over 'deads' almost stacked to the roof, but leaving just enough room for a 20metre-ish crawl to a forefield, and the prospect of the uncomfortable return crawl.



Back at the shaft the climb out was seamless, and after 10 minutes I was clipping into the safety loop, and exiting the pithead, for a walk back to the car and a well-deserved coffee at 'Insomnia' in Calver.

On the whole not the greatest mine, and definitely a very unstable one, but it's main shaft is an absolute gem, and where else can you find a complete plankway?

(Here is a link to more of Gaz's photos:
<https://photos.app.goo.gl/EEG7grjEHSyijYVC7>)

Gaz Mcshee

Gaz asks:

'Can anyone help? Apparently a survey was done by Sheffield Caving Club in 1956; does anyone have a copy, or know where I could get one from ? Also, more explorations were done in 1974, and an article appeared in the PDMHS bulletin 5.6, pp 360-361. Does anyone have a copy of this they could share with me please as I can't find it online ?'



Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club: 30th January 2022. Ogof O'r Herwheliwr (Poacher's Cave), Cilcain, near Mold, North Wales. [SJ 191655]

Dan Baddeley, Darren Conde, Neil Conde, C.J. {Cameron Atkinson}, Des Kelly, Steve Knox, Steve Pearson-Adams, John Preston, Ant.

'Poacher's Cave' was a new venue for me. Although there have been a number of visits by CCPC Members over recent years, somehow I have always managed to be away doing something else, however Annie and I have walked through the area several times. We arranged to meet at 10.00 am. at the small car park by the Cilcain Bridge over the River Alyn. After reading the dire warnings about the cave being '*prone to severe and rapid flooding, ... in a highly unpredictable manner*', I was glad that the weather had been very dry throughout January, and the river by the car park was exceptionally low; barely a trickle, with large stretches of riverbed dust dry.

We were soon changed, and set off back up the hill, following the road to the first bend, where the footpath headed off left, steeply back down through the trees (to avoid a line of static caravans) to join the old leat (man-made water channel) running almost horizontally, about five metres above the riverbed, in a downstream direction.



Steve P-A led us straight to the entrance, at the base of a small outcrop on the right of the path, and disappeared inside to rig the first pitch of about five metres. I followed him in, along an easy crawl for about six metres, passing through an open metal door, to the head of the pitch, which was covered by a heavy sheet of metal just beyond. The others had gone off, further along the riverbed to locate the entrance to Ogof Hesp Alyn.

The gate.

Being the only pitch in the cave, no SRT gear was necessary, and so, using in-situ hangers, Steve rigged an electron ladder and safety rope, and then life-lined me down the pitch – a narrow rift which was slightly awkward at the top (just getting your feet on the rungs) but dry and straightforward. The others had returned by then, and were soon descending to join me in the spacious, walking-height passage below, which appeared to have been mined. One way led to a blank wall, but in the other direction a scramble down a hole reached 'Old Springs Passage' – crawling height, with a smooth, rock floor. Large scallop marks in the rock show that this passage once carried a sizable river. Banks of grey silt were visible on both sides and thin roots hung from cracks in the roof. Gradually the passage became stooping height, and its cross section changed to be almost triangular – the aptly names 'Isosceles Passage'.



John Preston descending the entrance pitch.



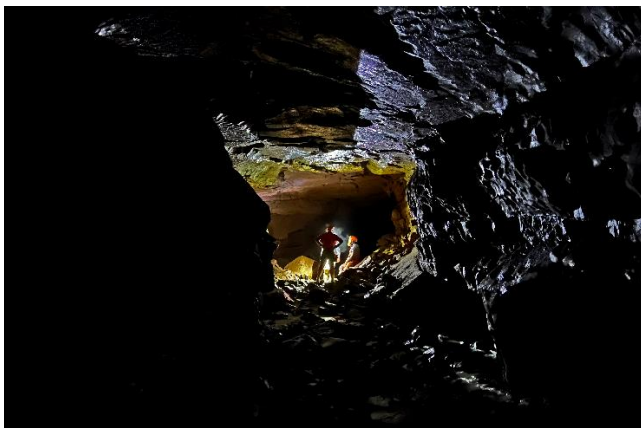
Neil Conde in Old Springs Passage.



John Preston in Old Springs Passage and on, into Isosceles Passage.



We soon reached an area with several large chambers, and various crawls off, including a couple of awkward ways down, one a smooth walled shaft, which apparently led to a lower level which can be reached by a different route. We could already hear the sound of rushing water, and by following the main passage through a muddy tube and down a steep mud bank, we entered a wide, major passage carrying an active stream.



The water was flowing towards us, but immediately disappeared amongst boulders on the left. We continued, following the impressive passage upstream, but all too soon the character changed as the dimensions reduced and the lower roof forced us to crouch, and eventually crawl in the water to pass particularly constricted sections.

The Streamway: Photo by C.J.

Not far beyond the low sections, we reached the largest chamber in the system. A high, roughly circular space, with a massive stalagmite boss crowning a pile of boulders in the centre, and a flowstone cascade in the roof, directly above. There was a wet squirm through, between the boulders underneath the boss, but no-one seemed particularly keen to wriggle through.

John Preston at the Boss: Photo by C.J.



Steve Knox waiting while Steve P-A checks that this really is the very end: Photo by C.J.

Off to the side of the chamber, one section of the roof contained an impressive mass of fossil brachiopods (common in Carboniferous Limestone – formed between 363 and 325 million years ago). Continuing upstream, the passage became lower and more constricted until no further progress

was possible, however an easy squirm up to the left led into the final, shattered chamber. We all spent a while 'relaxing' under the none-too-solid looking roof, with multiple tree roots



hanging down from the cracks, but were unable to hear the traffic noises from above, reported by others. The survey showed that we were almost back under the car park where we had started ! – this was via the amazing i-phone technology demonstrated by C.J.. Des even managed to get an internet connection !!!

'A Meeting of Minds'

The final chamber: Photo by C.J..

As we made our way back along the streamway, every side passage was investigated , and eventually the way down into the lower series was reached. Four of us decided to miss out the pleasures of the 'constricted and awkward' lower route and agreed to meet the others where their passage rejoined the main route further on. John Preston and Ant. spent a few minutes exploring a constricted oxbow (too constricted for some !), but then rejoined Des and I as we went on towards the exit. Surprisingly, we arrived at the foot of the ladder without making contact with the others, and were starting out when they reappeared, having had to abandon the lower series route due to the shattered and unstable state of the connection.



While the last members of the group were taking their turns to exit, I wandered off along the dry riverbed to find the entrance to Ogof Hesp Alyn – rather uninspiring.

Left: Neil Conde exiting Ogof O'r Herwheliwr (Poacher's Cave).

Right: The inconspicuous lid covering the entrance to Ogof Hesp Alyn.



Another excellent CCPC Meet, and well supported by members, despite Covid. Unless credited to C.J., the photographs above are my own, however Des also took a good number of excellent photographs, and made them available online at:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/jhhhL4nJf8xUMFax7>.

Steve Knox



Derbyshire Cave Rescue are holding their first open day in three years, on 15th May, at their base in Buxton. This is a chance for cavers to see what we do, and what is involved in membership. It isn't a hard sell, but if you are interested in joining, you'll hopefully have all your questions answered. It is still worth coming, if you've not been to one before, even if you have no intention of joining - you will likely spot some familiar faces! You will need to let us know you are coming, so we can plan catering and such like.

Jenny Drake

See: [Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation \(derbyshirecro.org.uk\)](http://derbyshirecro.org.uk) for details and booking.

Thanks to those who submitted material for this Newsletter - as always, I am keen to receive anything (cave related !) for the CCPC Newsletter – photos, write-ups, whatever !

Finally, keep safe and keep caving,

Steve Knox. 6th February 2022