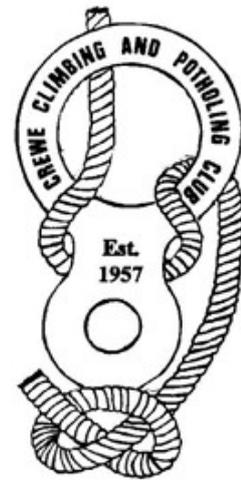


# C.C.P.C. Newsletter 144. April 2023

Log on to [www.ccpc.org.uk](http://www.ccpc.org.uk)

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## Planned Club Meets, etc., from March to June 2023:



### **Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club:**

Sun. 12 <sup>th</sup> Mar.	Hough Level, Alderley Edge Mines. <i>Alt.: Hartington Moor Farm Adit.</i>	Huge complex, with a boat trip or swim. <b>5</b> Members attended. <i>Short passage with crawls over debris.</i>
Sat. 25 <sup>th</sup> Mar.	P8 (Jackpot), Perryfoot, Derbyshire. <i>Alt.: Mistral Hole, Yorks..</i>	A superb system with two short pitches. <b>3</b> Members enjoyed a wet P8 trip.
Mon. 3 <sup>rd</sup> April	CCPC Monthly Meeting (also on-line via Zoom)	The Red Bull, Butt Lane, Nr. Kidsgrove 8.30 pm.
Sun. 9 <sup>th</sup> April	Cae Coch Sulphur Mine, near Trefriw, Conway Valley, N. Wales. <i>Alt.: Perryfoot Cave, Derbys..</i>	A complex of chambers and workings with extensive mineral deposits. <b>6</b> Members explored the system.
Sat. 22 <sup>nd</sup> April	Shuttleworth Pot, Leck Fell, Yorks..	A recently discovered system with superb formations. SRT pitches.
Sat. 22 <sup>nd</sup> April	DCRO PPE check day at the Staden Lane, Buxton, Rescue Base.	10.00 am start for initial training in the Community Room.
** . ** May	Mouldridge Mine, Derbyshire. <i>Alt.: Moorfurlong Mine &amp; Cavern.</i>	Interesting mine complex, often used for novice trips. No SRT needed
Mon. 15 <sup>th</sup> May	CCPC Monthly Meeting (also on-line via Zoom)	The Red Bull, Butt Lane, Nr. Kidsgrove 8.30 pm.
** . ** May	King Pot, Kingsdale, Yorkshire. <i>Alt. ; Illusion Pot.</i>	Challenging, with some technical squeezes. Lower passages - flood prone.
** ** May – ** June	<i>Bradford Pothole Club Gaping Gill Winch Meet – all week.</i>	Earliest descent 08.00. Limited number per day. £15 per person, cash only.
Plenty of other trips continue to take place, often organised at short notice. If possible and practical, please let other Members know what you are planning, by using e-mail, and try to support Club trips when you can. <p style="text-align: right;"><b>Steve Knox, Ed.</b></p>		



### **Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation:**

DCRO team members continue to be ready to assist whenever required, and regular training continues, either at the DCRO base in Buxton, or at cave locations in the Peak District – both underground and on the surface.

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



# Engine Vein - Hough Level - Wood Mine, Alderley Edge.

## 12<sup>th</sup> March 2023

### Gaz Mcshee

Five of us turned out today for a trip into the wizarding world of Alderley Edge through Engine Vein and out of Wood Mine.

I got there early after a stop at McDonald's for a dose of corporate poison and got a lovely free parking spot further down the road from the National Trust car park saving me 8 quid in the process.

Having an hour to waste I went for a walk over the edge to Stormy Point and back, finding the hidden entrances to the local underworld as a means of passing time.

9 am arrived, and after getting kitted in my urban chic relaxed caving attire, I wandered up to the rich people's parking area to meet the rich cavers who



were getting ready whilst watching the rich joggers doing what can only be described as a message across the carpark and into the woods. Why do they do it? Beyond logic, but hey maybe it will become an Olympic sport in the future.

The team were already assembling for the big training session which made for probably the safest days caving in the area. I hung around on site whilst we were underground.

Once the team made their final preparations we headed off to the starting point of our trip, the entrance gate into the mine.

The passages in here are lovely and roomy with no need to really duck at any point only sometimes is a little dip of the head and shoulders required but at no point is it on the same scale as its neighbour West Mine. However, what it lacks in jaw dropping voids, it makes up for in stunning colour.



Copper ore is obvious almost everywhere in here, and where water has breached from above, flow-stoning runs from ceiling to floor in the most intense blues and greens one can imagine. Add this to the reds and yellows of the sandstone bed rock and the sight is truly one to behold, especially in the unbelievable Blue Shaft.

We hopped onto the boat for a ride through the Hough Level, which I failed to take a single picture of because I wasn't paying attention to what I was doing , and after our guide went back for the others, Dan and I went and explored the upper passageways of the section we were in.



More crab walking to the first pitch, from where we chose to take the top route through Stal Passage to the 'Old Iron Ladder Pitch', avoiding the crabwalk to the True Second Pitch.



Above: The passage between the entrance and the first pitch.



Left: The top of the Old Iron Ladder Pitch, and start of the traverse to the alternative route to Mud Hall.

Rob rigged both the traverse and the pitch, and he and Heather took the drop, while I chose to take the high-level traverse into Mud Hall as I'd not done it before.

Right: Entering T'Owd Mon's Rift.



We took a tour of the sumps, now full to the brim with water - a stark difference from last summer, and also had a crawl into some of the linking passages (it really blows your mind at how interconnected this great little system is), before heading back to the daylight.

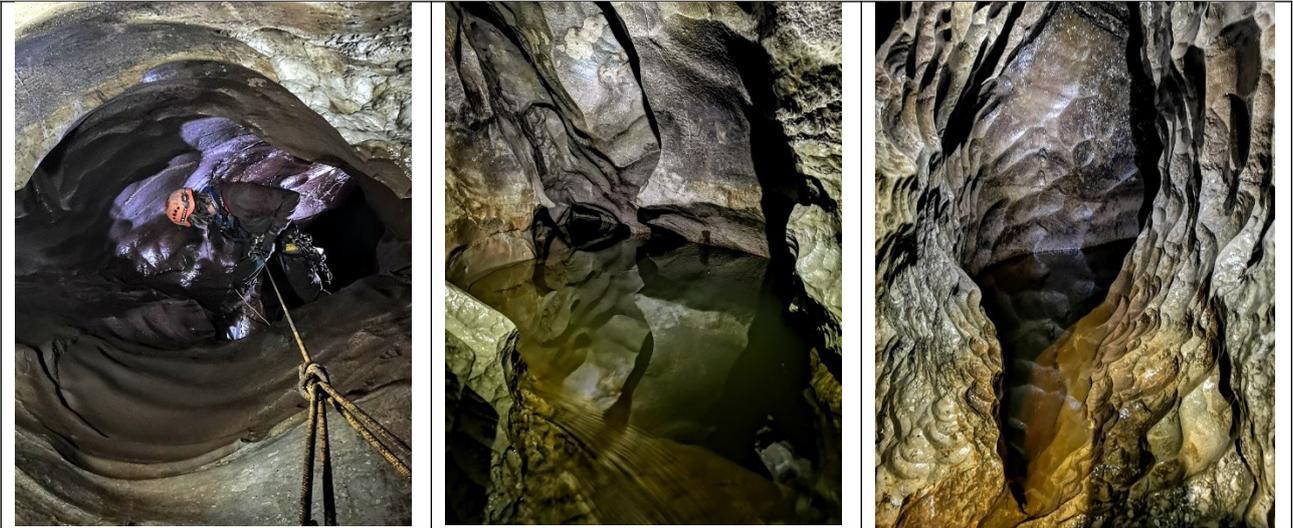
It was another great trip as always in P8, with great company, thanks guys.

**Gaz Mcshee**

A link to the very over-edited photos is here:

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/QqZLrdQL875ZjLZz8>

Gaz added a couple of pictures of Top Sump taken during the summer on one of his solo exploits, to complement the photos of the same location which he had taken during this trip:



Above (left): Looking down the empty Top Sump, last summer, and (right), brimming over full sumps !!

Alan Brentnall's Comments: I have lots of happy memories of "Jackpot"; there are so many ways to do it (including getting rescued there in 2007), and so many places within it to visit! P8 is a very interesting hole hydrologically. There is a really good write-up about P8's sumps and hydrological connections in an old Eldon journal from the 1980s, which includes notes on the other "P" caves in the immediate area. When you consider that (under normal conditions) the stream which enters the current entrance to P8 is not the same stream which leads you down to the main sump at the lower end of T'Owd Mon's Rift, and that there are at least four other sumps upstream of Sump 1, then you begin to realise that cavers have hardly scratched the surface of what's to be found underground on Mr Ritter's farm at Perryfoot. Cheers, **Alan**.

### **P8 Sumps:**

Alan's comments set me off considering the confusing sump situation in P8. It is easy to be misled into thinking that the busy little stream which does its best to soak you as you share the same space at the entrance, is the same stream which you splash along on the final section of 'T'Owd Mon's Rift' to **the sump**. It isn't - more about that later ! Even '**the sump**' itself is confusing, as it has had a number of different labels attached to it, depending on the survey or account date which you happen to be using. When the selection of other sumps in the upstream area were identified they became either Sump 1 (or D), Sump 2 (or C), Sump 3 (or B) and Sump 4 (or E). Sump 3/B is The Main Stream Inlet (also called Top Sump), and the final sump, downstream, is **The Main Stream Sump**, or Sump 5 (or A) - or at least it was once !! After the divers got involved it became Sump 1, as the further diving exploration found a series of sumps beyond, which were logically numbered Sump 2, Sump 3, Sump 4, etc., up to Sump 9 (or even more, by now). The upstream sumps lost their numbers, and went back to being alphabet sumps, so Sump 1 is back to being Sump D. The entrance stream usually disappears (and is not seen again) amongst boulders just beyond the bottom of the True Second Pitch, except when it doesn't, but instead flows on to enter Sump 1/D. A link with Sump 2/C accessible during drought, allows Sump 2/C (normally static) to overflow and

join the water from 3/B, the Main Inlet Sump - this water has come from surface Swallets P2 - P7, and appears here in the cave for the first time. Sump 4/E is small, tight, and static. So, what happened to the entrance stream ?? Confused yet ? - I am.

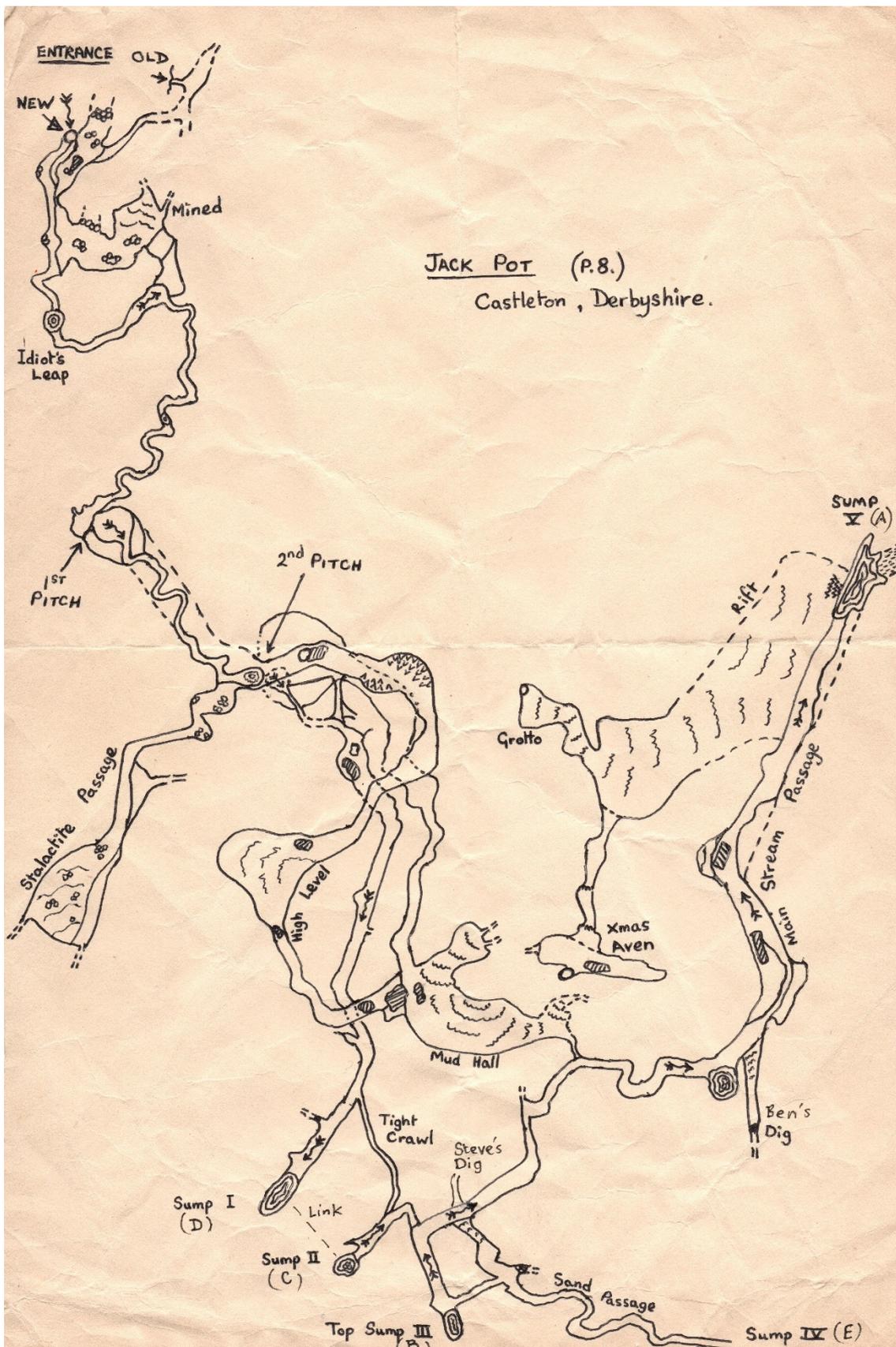
I located my copy of the Eldon journal that Alan mentioned: Vol. 8 No. 1. 1972.

**Editor.**

**More P8 / Jackpot Notes.**

**Editor.**

To clarify the sump numbering / lettering it seems useful to include a simple survey of P8 / Jackpot for those not completely familiar with which sumps are which !



JACK POT (P.8.)  
Castleton, Derbyshire.

With all the latest concerns about using other people's writing / drawing / photographs etc., I have chosen to use an old hand-drawn survey from one of my notebooks (not quite old enough to be drawn using a quill pen). Clearly, it is based on at least one version of an early 'proper' printed/published survey, but I can't track down which one.

I had a look through my collection of guidebooks and discovered the following:

1. 'The Caves of Derbyshire', compiled by Trevor D. Ford – First edition - published 1964 – cost 7/6.
  - There are no entries for P8 or Jackpot.
2. 'The Caves of Derbyshire', compiled by Trevor D. Ford – Revised Second Edition - published 1967 – cost 10/6.
  - There is an entry for '**JACK POT, formerly known as Swallet P8**', but no survey.
3. 'Caves of Derbyshire' – compiled by Trevor D. Ford – Third Edition - published 1974 – cost £1.20.
  - There is an entry for '**JACKPOT (P8)**', which includes a version of the BSA survey, dated 1967, which labels the sumps as **I, II, III, IV, V**.
4. 'Caves of Northern Derbyshire, Part 4: Rushup Edge Swallets' by Dave Elliot.
  - There is a three-page entry for '**Swallet P8**', and a simple survey, which label the sumps as **A, B, C, D, E**. A further full page describes the sumps '**Beyond Sump A**'.
5. 'Caves of Derbyshire' - compiled by Trevor D. Ford and David W. Gill – Fifth Edition – published 1984 – cost £3.95.
  - There is an entry for '**JACKPOT (P8)**', which includes a survey based on work by Eldon Pothole Club and the Cave Diving Group, and which labels the sumps as **B, C, D, E**, and **Main Stream Sump**.
6. 'Caves of the Peak District' – compiled by David W. Gill and John S. Beck – Sixth Edition – published 1991 – cost £14.95.
  - There is an entry for '**P8 (Jack Pot)**', which includes a much reduced (and difficult to use) survey based on work by Eldon Pothole Club and cave divers, which labels the sumps **B, C, D, E**, and **Sump 1, Sump 2**, etc, to **Sump 9**.
7. 'Caves of the Peak District' – compiled by Iain Barker and John S. Beck – Seventh Edition – published 2010 – cost £ 20.00.
  - There is an entry for '**P8 (Jack Pot)**' , and a much-improved version of the survey used in the previous edition of the guide. The sumps are labelled **B, C, D, E**, and **Sump 1, Sump 2**, etc, to **Sump 9**.

I was always led to believe that the name should correctly be written as one word, '**Jackpot**', as the original explorers – the Manchester Group of The British Speleological Association - had 'hit the Jackpot' late in 1964 when their dig in **P8** broke into open passage. The name also loosely refers to H. Jackson, one of the most active members of the B.S.A..

At that time a number of sinkholes, either active or 'assumed', had been investigated along the boundary where the water running south from the Edale Shales of Rushup Edge reached the limestone between Perryfoot and Windy Knoll. They were numbered for convenience, as P1 to P8, starting in the east, however further sinks were identified later, leading to the addition of P0.

**An easy challenge:** Do you know what the P in P8 stands for ? (No rude answers please !!)

**Further Reading:** 'P8 – CASTLETON, DERBYSHIRE' by C.D. Westlake & J.S. Cobbett, from the Eldon Pothole Club Journal, Volume 8, No.1. – 1972 – Pages 15 to 31.



## Cae Coch Sulphur Mine, North Wales.

9<sup>th</sup> April 2023  
Gaz Mcshee

Five of us had an early start yesterday, while one person had a lie in, for a trip to a Welsh mine which had been on my radar for such a long time, and had to be cancelled last year due to the sad passing of Des.

**Cae Coch** was a sulphur mine which supplied chemicals used in the manufacture of explosives during WW1 and WW2, saving the MOD having to get its supplies imported via risky sea crossings, where it was in danger from the all too present risk of U-Boat attack.

We made good time getting to our rendezvous, and as the sixth member of our party grabbed a little extra beauty sleep in a local B&B, we put the world to rights with some deep, intellectual musing on political correctness, whilst passing the time away on a sun-drenched pub car park.



Once our sixth member arrived, we headed off to the parking spot, and after getting ready we started out on the tedious, and in the early spring sunshine, flaming warm (!) ascent, up a heavily wooded Welsh mountain side, hoping to find a hidden gem about halfway up and long since lost to nature.

The plan was to climb the old haulage incline, then at the top take the tramway straight to the entrance, marked Adit 2 on the map, and the main way into the largest mined area on the hillside. Well, after the steep, overgrown, and very slippery climb, taking in the various derelict structures on the way, we arrived at the tramway.

When one imagines an abandoned tramway the image one sees is that of a lovely, flat, easy to traverse roadway, devoid of obstacles, and a pleasant stroll to reach one's destination. This is not the reality which faced us when we arrived at the old winding house. The tramway resembled the scene of the asteroid blast which levelled many hundreds of miles of forest in Siberia in the last century, and if we were to make our destination, we had to fight our way through about three hundred yards of fallen trees or go back down and find the other path which was not obvious from below and equally if more overgrown than one we had just climbed. Sod that, the Prince in Sleeping through the thicket to others now seeing that possible quickly Finally after a battle we broke out into the magnificent cavernous



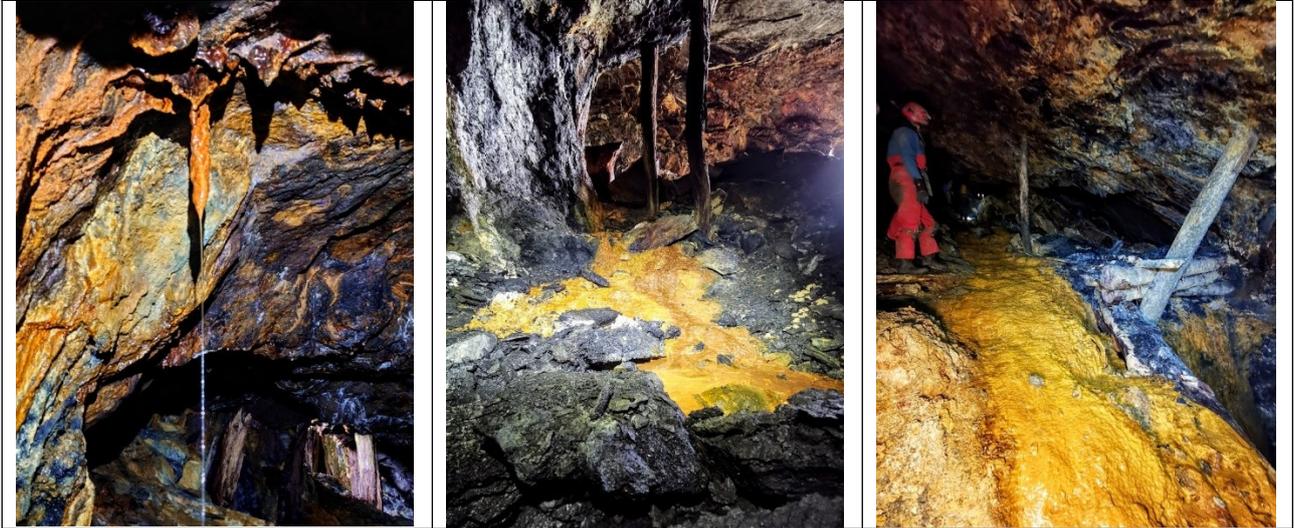
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thought I, and in I went like Beauty, hell bent on breaking reach his true love. The forcing a way through was followed suit.

worthy any grade five flat out opening and finally saw the entrance to adit two. After a



rest to recover and wonder at the wonderfully colourful entrance we lit up and descended into the steep pit just behind the entrance. The world became colourful, the darkness broken by our headlamps illuminated the most amazing spectacle of glowing orange, yellow, brown, and blue. The mine dropped down steeply on a loose floor of scree which was, and still is, shed from the roof regularly.



After a short while, passing many ancient relics, we discovered the flooded section and the first sight of the red water the mine is famous for, and wow it's a sight to see, deep claret red and, with a Ph of 2, pretty nasty too.



Traversing from here, we came to a streamway falling into an open pit to a lower level, with a fixed handline in place. While Rob dropped in we admired the beauty of the flowstone in the water, and then it struck home that this flowstone was alive and flowing with the water! This was the acid-loving bacteria that we had read about, that miraculously survives where no other living thing could thrive.



Rob reappeared and myself , Neil and Dan descended and found the Red lake, I thought hell to the acid I need to see what is hiding round the corner out of sight so in I went while Neil and Dan stayed and explored the sludge pit in the other direction.



The lake was knee deep, and shortly after turning a corner past some lower flooded workings, it finished at a bright orange ochre floored passage that ran for about 300 ft to a forefield, with a blind raise off at about half-way. I made my way back happy not to have missed out on this little bit of the mine guarded by the dreaded acid water. Its effects however would become apparent later. We reassembled and started the climb back to the upper levels, following the stream



past ochre flows and 'rusticles', and lovely pools of deep red.



Finally we reached the top levels of the mine and turned towards the entrance, passing more flows and brightly coloured ore deposits, and then there were bats ! - Lots of bats, much to Dan's dismay.



Dan admitted that he was not a fan of bats when they fly around, but these bats were happy to stay hanging from the roof and just observed us trespassing in their dark world for a short time, before leaving them again in darkened silence.



Out again into the light we found the direct path down, and after fighting our way through the vegetation we made it to the van, and clean clothes. By now the acid in the lake had started to work on my feet and as we sat in the pub having a bit of nosh and a beer, I felt like I had a serious case of athlete's foot, and my hands were raw from dipping them into the water, however, it was well worth the suffering for another great day underground with the Crewe faithful. Following a tip off from a friendly local the five of us said goodbye to Heather and went off on a wild ride into the hills to find a "quick" route to the entrance. As beautiful as the scenery was high in the Welsh mountains the effort to get there far outweighed the

ease to get to the Adit. So, if anyone fancies a visit, the way in from the bottom is a thirty-minute slog through a dense forest and the way in from the top is probably a lot longer but very scenic.

The photos I took are here for anyone interested, but be warned, there are a lot!

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/GuEPt4eeiVGCQEiJ9>

**Gaz**

**Mcshee**

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## **PPE Day at DCRO**

**22<sup>nd</sup> April 2023**

Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation requires a tremendous amount of gear to be available for any type of shout we respond to. Much of this is personal protective equipment (PPE), on which someone's life may depend; be they rescuer, or casualty. This includes general caving items, like carabiners, helmets, harnesses, jammers, and ropes, but also more specialised items, like heavy duty lifting strops, swivels, stretchers and so on. Once a year we carry out an inspection of all PPE to ensure it is all in-date, traceable, undamaged and our own. It is not unknown for people's personal krabs to end up in a rigging bag, for example.

Many hands make light work, and around twenty people turned up at the Staden Lane, Buxton Base, for 10am on Saturday morning, 22<sup>nd</sup> April. Steve Knox, Pete Dell and Jenny Drake attended from CCPC, instead of sampling the delights of Shuttleworth Pot in Yorkshire.

First thing was a training session in the upstairs meeting room, given by another of the team's 'Petes' You don't have to be called Pete to join DCRO, but it definitely helps! The training covered what to look for, how to mark a piece of gear that passes inspection, what to do with anything that fails, or which is questionable, and how to record the inspection results. The standards we were working to were much higher than most of us use for personal kit. I reckon a significant proportion of mine would be condemned out of hand ! After the training talk, and handling Pete's 'show and tell' examples, it was time to get to work. We divided into teams of around four and set to. With so many people available, rig bags, bolting kits, stretchers, and rope bags were emptied, checked against the official contents list, inspected, and marked. Any discrepancies were made good and dubious items taken to the quarantine area for a decision. Before long it was time for lunch, with Pete Dell heading over to the chippy with a massive order. After lunch it was back to work for the last of the bags, finishing at around 3.00pm for a group photo.



It was very reassuring to know at the end of the day that anything we were taking out of a team vehicle on a dark and stormy night was going to be safe to use and in excellent condition before we take it down a cave and trash it completely while rescuing some one! The day also explained why equipment costs are necessarily a significant part of the team's spend each year, so if you see a DCRO collection tin being rattled, please put some pennies in it.

*Photo: Thanks to Pete Knight (D.C.R.O.).*

**Jenny**

**Drake**



**Shuttleworth Pot, Yorkshire.**

**22<sup>nd</sup> April  
2023**

**Steve Pearson-Adams**

Following our recent trip into a Welsh sulphur mine, normal service was resumed, with four club members meeting up at junction 17 - Sandbach, to make the trip up to Ingleton. Neil was on driving duty and once the gear was loaded, Heather, Dan, Neil and myself were on our way. It wasn't long before we met the wall of bad weather cutting a swathe from Hull to Liverpool. The weather however wasn't our only worry as Neil's car had developed a disturbing whining sound emanating from the off-side-front wheel. Deliberations followed; was it an ill fitted air box cover, wheel bearing or outer drive shaft, take your pick. Luckily we made it to our destination but worryingly the noise was still with us.

Inglesport was a hive of feasting cavers and walkers tucking into the delights on offer. Our order was simple with four mini cavers breakfasts being lapped up fuelling us for the trip that awaited. Up on the Fell the cloud base was low and quite murky, with constant rain. This wasn't going to clear any time soon so let's get on with it. To our



amusement Neil pulled out a broly, however attempting to get kitted up with only one hand wasn't quite working, so back went the broly. The stomp across the Fell wasn't that bad considering the weather and finding the entrance was aided by Neil, who having logged the location into his phone, guiding us in, once we had left the wall at the point you meet the limestone outcrop. We lifted the lid and dropped into Shuttleworth just after 11:30. It was nice to be rigging again and I was soon working my way out along the right wall leading into the main Chamber and the Divers Pitch with the rest of the party following closely behind. All safely down we discarded some of our gear and made our way into south passage and the canyon beyond. After the short crawl over the mud bank the magic starts.



This SSSI cave system just blows you away with the variety, colour and quality of formations. Spectacular arrays of helictites, calcite curtains,

straws, stals, calcite rafts, gour pools, false floors and calcite flows adorn the Canyon in every direction. Most unusual, notwithstanding the helictites, are the volcano like calcite flows, and the lonely Painters Pallet - a stal boss displaying an array of darker colours.

In an area of 'Dogger Bank' (named after the dog skeleton found here) hang approximately 100 calcite straws which resemble Cloud Chamber in Dan yr Ogof, albeit in miniature.

On the way back we entered a descending tube which Dan had noticed earlier. Neil was first down "My Newt Passage" while I looked on, all the while thinking that getting back out would not be easy. However, in I went with Dan taking up the rear and Heather holding station.



This tube drops you over an edge onto a fine example of a mud cracked floor where, lying on top, are the skeletons of two newts.

*Left: Bones ! The dog in 'Dogger Bank', and a newt from 'My Newt'.*

I was first to have a go at getting out which was a real struggle. Why hadn't I brought my 10-metre length of 8mm today of all days ? I needn't have worried as Dan and Heather came to my rescue, and Dan helped to push me upward while Heather lowered a length of 5 mm accessory cord for me to grab hold of. Relieved to be out, we all had a laugh about it afterwards. Before making our way out, Neil and Dan had a look into the Exercise Yard beyond the streamway in the northern part of the system, with Heather dropping the slope to the streamway. I decided to wait at the bottom of the pitch as I had been in 'the yard' a few times. Upwards and onwards, we all made our way out, with Neil derigging. Back on the surface we were greeted with broken cloud, dry conditions, and views out to Morecambe Bay. A thoroughly brilliant 3.5 hour trip to a very special place.

Huge gratitude to Jason Mallinson and Rick Stanton who gained access to the system having dived through from the Witches Cave in 1997, and climbed up to within 17 metres of the Fell surface. On a subsequent dive in 2010 they were able to place a radio transmitting beacon at the top of the climb, which resulted in a surface location, allowing the dig and subsequent breakthrough. Club members present: Heather Simpson, Neil Conde, Dan Baddeley, and Steve Pearson-Adams.

Thanks to Neil for the photographs used in this report. The full selection, taken by Neil with his phone camera (amazing !) can be seen by following the link: <https://photos.app.goo.gl/FQcFMobrG1Lwebii7>

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**Bats Underground: All bats and their roosts are protected by law. Bear the following Conservation Code in mind to stay on the right side of the law:**

**Do not handle bats. Take extra care when caving near bats. Do not take photos of bats or nearby bats.**(it is illegal to photograph bats without a licence to do so). **Do not warm up hibernating bats. Do not shine bright lights on bats. Do not smoke or make excessive noise. Keep caving groups small. Seek advice before digging or blasting.**

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As always, my thanks to everyone who contributes to the CCPC Newsletter, and also to those who acknowledge receipt afterwards. It's good to receive **Alan's contributions**, 'our man north of the border', and from Members anywhere in the world. All errors, changes, or corrections are mine – my apologies. Keep safe, keep caving, and continue to support your club. **Steve Knox, Editor.**

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