

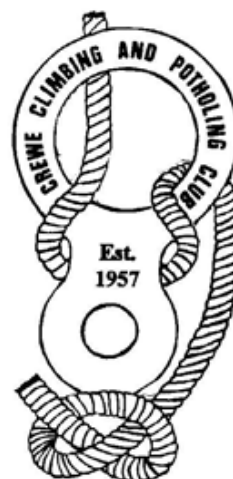


# C.C.P.C. Newsletter 153. April – June 2024

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Editor: Steve Knox

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## Planned Club Meets, etc., from April to June 2024

Sat. 6th April	Moel Fferna Slate Mine, Glyndyfrdwy, North Wales.	An extensive multi-level complex of slate caverns
Sat. 20 <sup>th</sup> April	Five Ways Pot, Dowlass Moss, (above Cold Cotes), Ingleborough. <i>Alt. Walk up to Gaping Gill &amp; Ingleborough summit.</i>	Only opened in 2022. Long walk in; 7 pitches, which can be wet. <i>Park in Clapham for spectacular walk via Clapham Beck (£ small charge).</i>
Sun. 5 <sup>th</sup> May	Giants Hole, Castleton, Derbyshire.	Always a favourite. Some SRT.
Mon. 13 <sup>th</sup> May	CCPC Monthly Meeting. (Also available to Members via 'Zoom'.	Upstairs at The Red Bull, Butt Lane, nr. Kidsgrove, Staffs. 8.30 pm..
Sat. 18 <sup>th</sup> May	Slaughter Stream Cave, Forest of Dean.	Over 14 km of passages – some SRT.
	Merlin Mine, Stoney Middleton, Derbyshire. <i>Alt. Nicker Grove Mine / Carlswark.</i>	Many alternatives possible here, including easy SRT / no SRT.
	Top Sink to Lancaster Hole, Easegill, Yorkshire.  <i>Alt. Lancaster Hole to Wretched Rabbit, Easegill.</i>	One of many routes in this world-class system, and incorporating the first section of 'The Greater Easegill Traverse' (perhaps the greatest traverse in British Caving). Snug and contorted in early sections. SRT. <i>Classic through trip, long and impressive, with easy SRT.</i>
	Little Neath River Cave, Brecon Beacons, South Wales.	A sporting, active river cave – you will get very wet ! Wet suit recommended.
	Porth yr Ogof, South Wales.	Another impressive river cave. Wet suit recommended. Treat resurgence pool exit (not essential) with extreme care.

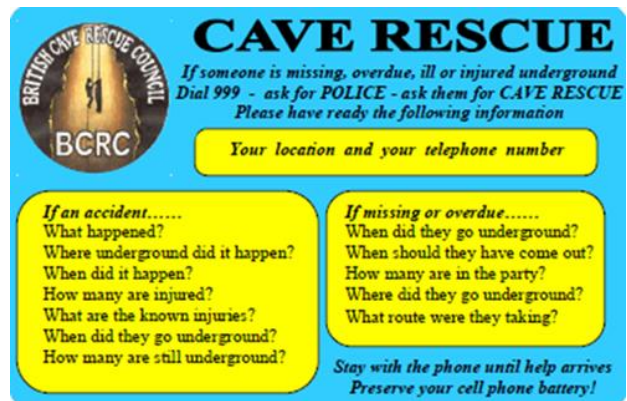
For Yorkshire trips it is always worth looking up (and printing) the route descriptions provided on the internet by **The Council Of Northern Caving Clubs**: [www.cncc.org.uk/caving](http://www.cncc.org.uk/caving)  
The descriptions are regularly updated, and can be downloaded, as they are Licensed under a: *Creative Commons Attribution-NonCommercial-NoDerivatives 4.0 International Licence* (!!)

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**Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation:** DCRO team members including a number from CCPC, continue to be ready to assist whenever required, and regular team training continues.  
<https://www.facebook.com/DerbyshireCaveRescue>

There have been **three** call-outs so far, in 2024, with successful outcomes on each occasion.



## How To Call Out Cave Rescue in the UK

If you need to call out a cave rescue team in the UK, **Dial 999**, Ask for the **Police**, then **Cave Rescue**. They will need your location, the cave location, and your contact number, this is so the Cave Rescue Team in your area can call you direct for information about the nature of the Call Out.

Useful information to have written down:

### If an accident...

What happened?  
Where underground did it happen?  
When did it happen?  
How many are injured?  
What are the known injuries?  
When did they go underground?  
How many are still underground?

### If missing or overdue...

Where did they plan to visit?  
When did they go underground?  
When should they have come out?  
How many are in the party?  
What route did they take?  
What cars that should be there?  
Contact numbers of the Party?

Remember to save your Battery if you are on a mobile.

The BCRC have produced the handy **blue** card (above) which you can print out and take with you to keep in your vehicle..



View from inside Bat Cave – Photo Credit: A. Pedley

## *A caving extravaganza with Yorkshire Subterranean Society and a lonely Eldon member.*

### **Ade Pedley - Introduction:**

There have been many caving expeditions to Kelmend province in Albania since 2009, these have always traditionally been Eldon PC organised trips, Eldon PC have carried out extensive exploration of the area and caves contained therein, on this occasion only one Eldon member (Dave Gledhill) could make it out unfortunately, the remaining members of the team being from YSS who carried on the exploration in fine style!! I expect Eldon will be back in force in the near future to carry on where we leave off.

Lëpushë is a settlement in the former Kelmend municipality, Shkodër County, in northern Albania. It is a remote area with just one road through, and is skirted all around by the border with Montenegro. It is situated at roughly 1,300m altitude and has deep snow from October through April. The increasingly excellent accommodation at the Alpini Hotel is gratefully used. The Eldon Pothole Club first had a recognisance to the area in 2009 and have organised a return trip almost every year since. The exploration has concentrated on a high karst area to the south with peaks reaching over 2,500m in altitude. The ascent each morning is strenuous, so it is only fitting that the caves are also extremely demanding. Typically vertical in nature and with many spacious shafts, any horizontal development is generally very tight and awkward, at least they are mostly clean. The deepest system to date is Madhe Ben which was concluded in 2011 at a depth of 435m at a sump. So far exploration in all caves has been stopped either due to snow plugs (near the entrance), too tight rifts, or sumps. All sumps are still above valley floor and may well hide exciting secrets beyond, especially as all known resurgences are far away and much lower. Although the tight nature of the known horizontal, vadose development suggests the sumps may well be on the small side.



## **The team:**

Skimming over the drunken debacle arriving at the airport, which included lost bags, lost people, lost hotel keys, lost money and eventually lost tempers, the team finally assembled at Lepushe in Kelmend province northern Albania in the Dinaric Alps, affectionately known locally as "The Accursed Mountains".

**Dave Gledhill (EPC):** The only EPC member to make it out this year, a veteran of many expeditions to Albania, with a wealth of knowledge of the local area, a fearless caver and pretty good with the drill.

**Ade Pedley (CCPC, YSS):** My seventh trip to Albania, so I know a bit but not as much as Dave, equally good with the drill though !!

**Andy Wilson (YSS):** First trip out to Albania.

**Nicola Wellings (CCPC, YSS):** First trip to Albania, wanting to grow bigger balls !!

**Katie Walker (YSS):** First trip to Albania.

**Janis Tomsons (YSS):** First trip to Albania, didn't fall in love with the caving but found a new passion in high level Alpine walking !!

## **A Brief recap on the 2019 Eldon Expedition:**

Four years previously, a team of five, including myself, John Pemberton-EPC, Rob Eavis-EPC, Luke Cafferty-EPC, and Dave Gledhill-EPC, had an excellent trip and made good progress in many caves and surface exploration. Dragon Cave ("Shpella e dragoit" in Albanian) was pushed along the bottom meanders to a conclusion at a sump. It was thought that there is a possible bypass to this sump, but this wasn't pushed at the time.

Nearing our last caving day (Friday 13<sup>th</sup>) myself and Dave Gledhill were making our way out of Dragon cave after a shortened trip due to a rockfall, so we had a bit of spare time and decided to have a look into an enticing hole that had been noticed many times previously, at the bottom of the second set of pitches. This was an awkward 3m climb into a tube and to our surprise the Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Series was discovered. We returned the next day armed with a 60m rope which got us to the top of a set of a slightly hading, draughty pitch, which needed some work to make it safe with loads of loose rock perched on the edge. Consequently we ran out of time, this being very frustrating for our last day of caving, i.e. plenty to go at, and no time to do it !!, then next year COVID struck so that was the end of that till 2023.

## **2023 Expedition objectives:**

The main objective was to push the new Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Series previously discovered on the last expedition, as this was the most promising lead we had, and it was heading in a different direction to the rest of the known passages and drafting well, so was an obvious choice.

We also had some other leads to look at including the so called "Bat Cave" on the very far side of the Cwm, an intriguing looking hole in the side of a cliff, which looked like a fun day out, and may possibly require bolting to get up to; Resurgence Cave, and a few other secret holes known only to Dave !!. There were other areas to prospect for new leads for future trips.

## **Dragon Cave (Shpella e dragoit):**

Back to present day: the long trudge to the cave started with us laden down with as much gear as we could carry. The first walk always seems the hardest and this was no exception. We stopped off at Snake cave, now fully explored and de rigged, to collect a bag of stashed 100m rope, adding further burden. We made it to Dragon cave after about 3 ½ hours walking, hot and pretty knackered, but keen for a spot of caving, so five of us set off down for a brief recce of the entrance series.

The next trip down (Dave and Andy) went to the top of the previous limit of exploration in Friday 13<sup>th</sup> where they found the rope had been partly damaged by a rockfall. After replacing the rope they descended the hading pitch into a small chamber with a blocked hole at the bottom, however a short scramble up the back of the chamber revealed a window of approximately 2 metres diameter, where an immense chamber was revealed ! This was initially easy bolting down to a rock bridge where the way on was not entirely obvious, so they retreated after running out of rope, but with approximately another 75 metres of depth added to the Friday 13<sup>th</sup> Series, so not a bad day !!.

Myself and Nicola started to bolt our way across to a small window on the far side of the entrance pitch, but depleted batteries put an end to that before we made it all the way over.

The next trip down was myself and Nicola, after a day of rain. We made it into the as-yet-unnamed chamber and soon found ourselves on a rock bridge of large, jammed boulders which I had swung onto with the intention of doing a re-hang off the far wall straight to the bottom. Looking from this new angle we could see the chamber was equally as long as it was high, perhaps 100m or so. There was also a streamway in the bottom which curved its way upstream out of sight. This looked to be about the same size as the streamway that appears lower in the cave, and is most likely the same stream. We bolted across the rock bridge to a good hang down

what seemed like a 40m pitch. Unfortunately what appeared to be good rock sounded alarmingly hollow, so now we knew where not to go !! We retreated back to the upper chamber at the window to check out a lead there; this will require some enlarging but could prove to be a way into the main chamber.

### **Bat Cave (Shpella e lakuriqëve të natës):**

Bat Cave is an intriguing hole, part way up a cliff shaped like the classic "Batman and Robin" logo. This was spotted many years ago by Dave Gledhill whilst on a walk over the back of the Cwm which is a high-level catchment area approximately 200m above the entrance to Dragon cave. It is a spectacular place with a magnificent ridge the full width of the cwm, and has probably never been fully traversed, in fact I am willing to bet nobody has touched any of it.

After collecting some gear from Dragon cave, including a drill and bolting kit in case we needed to bolt our way up to the entrance, myself and Nicola set off to what turned out to be a further two hour walk to get to the foot of Bat cave. The final slog up steep slabs, climbs and a final scree slope was tough going until we finally stood beneath Bat cave. To my pleasant surprise, it didn't look too bad to get to, at about 8~10m from the scree; game on I thought !!

Going for the direct approach, because that's the way I am, revealed a small trickle of water emanating from the cave, leaving a slimy trail at the crux move. This was probably about a V-Diff climbing grade, so I backed off to re-assess and spied a cunning set of gradually rising ledges which looked dry. They turned out to be very small edges covered in gravel which needed clearing to make progress. Eventually I made a bold step round a bulge into the cave, with the thought In my mind, "Don't fancy reversing that last bit", kind of feeling. I had the rope with me but after looking around I wish I had tied the drill bag onto the rope to pull up as Nik had decided to wait further back down the slabs to catch a few rays.

Back to the exploration of Bat Cave: this consisted of a muddy slope up to the back of the cave, to what I hoped might be caverns measureless to man, but the slope turned out to be more of a challenge than I first thought, being at about a 30 degree angle, I could get part way up, before losing traction, but after digging out a small foothold I managed to precariously edge my way up in an ungainly crab-like way. Digging in fingers, and everything else that I could, I just managed to see over the top of the rise to what looked like a blockage, before gravity overcame friction, and I was off ! Sliding down the muddy slope towards the exit, gaining speed, I had visions in my mind of flying out of the entrance to land on the scree slope some 10m below. I would surely have qualified for a Darwin award !! I managed to brake somehow, and decided that it was time to get down. With no drill, and no natural threads, I managed to do a classic knot-jam in two cracks to get over the wet section. All worked well and I retreated to find Nicola, after checking out a couple of other holes. The problem is that since then I have this nagging feeling that I didn't quite see over the top of the back of the cave properly - to say with 100% certainty that it didn't go. I can sense a return, but at least there is a rope there now !!

### **Other stuff:**

There was a variety of walking and prospecting for new caves. The area is rich in some fantastic walking which Katie and Andy explored on the non-caving days. Katie managed to get invited, somehow, into the local millionaire's gaff, for an all afternoon Raki drinking session on her day off caving. Janis didn't take to the caving out there, but managed a variety of Alpine walks and has found he has a passion for this style of walking!!

On the last day, after we had previously moved all the gear down from Dragon cave and stashed it for the next day's plan - to walk round and drop into a cave I discovered in 2011 and named "Taluski", nobody had been down there for eight years, during which time the hanging, dead tree had dropped into the entrance which now required excavating to get through. Once inside, the tree had also caused some significant boulders to trundle down the rift to the second pitch head. Amazingly all the ropes were ok, so we carried on to the top of a massive chamber approximately 150 metres deep. We had de-rigged this last time to prevent the ropes being damaged by what appears to be a significant amount of water in flood conditions. At the bottom of the pitch is a boulder floor which drafts if you move rocks around ! This is all to play for, and must have some significant passage below, but will also require some engineering to get there !!

Dave explored an interesting resurgence cave part way up a hillside - this emits a significant amount of water in flood and heads into a new area. Dave also checked out various leads he had identified on the last trip.

### **Next Trip:**

Plans for a return in 2024 are under way. We intend to explore the bottom of the new chamber in Friday 13<sup>th</sup>; this will require exploring both upstream and downstream. The potential for increasing the depth of this system lies in locating a higher entrance as the bottom appears to have a sump which maybe impassable. We intend to survey the new extension, and try and locate where a higher entrance might be, which could be a further 150 metres higher. We also have a number of new leads to look at, including Bridge Cave, and other higher entrances. There are also significant areas that we haven't even looked at yet.



## Moel Fferna Slate Mine, North Wales Sunday, 7<sup>th</sup> April 2024

Last Sunday saw seven club members make the trip over to North Wales. Our aim being to explore the various levels that make up Moel Fferna Slate Mine. First things first; we had to get there, and once in the area, find the access track.

Gaz picked up Neil then made his way to my house to collect me and Dan. Paul was driving the second vehicle with Darren and Rob as passengers. We were to meet up at a lay-by en-route, near to our destination, but more on that later. As we headed out of Crewe there was some confusion between the human Sat-nav, aka Neil, and the driver Gaz, over left and right on approach to a roundabout. This was soon overcome as Gaz made a double tour of said roundabout, accompanied by a mumbling of expletives which was to become a theme of the drive to Wales.

Let me explain: ..... unexpected pothole ..... oh \*\*\*\*!! said Gaz; flooded section of road....

What the \*\*\*\* said Gaz; another pothole.... \*\*\*\* me, said Gaz; 20 mph zones, one after another, \*\*\*\*\* man your having a \*\*\*\*\* laugh said Gaz; It was quite the drive, to everyone's amusement.

That lay-by I mentioned earlier turned out to be a very narrow access road that ran at the rear of a row of terraced cottages fronting the main road. Darren had guided Paul to it, with Gaz and crew following behind. The right-turn into the road was somewhat abrupt, and required Gaz to swerve right to narrowly avoid rear-ending the vehicle in front. More of what the \*\*\*\*, issued from Gaz. We regrouped and headed off down the road in search of the left turn which would take us up into the hills.

"Turn left here," instructed Neil. Gaz was somewhat sceptical, but who could blame him? The lane was very steep and narrow, and soon turned into a muddy, rutted track. I will leave it to the reader to imagine what Gaz might have been verbalising ??? To make it even more difficult, Gaz's car is low slung and having 4 aboard, and fully loaded, was not at all happy. The car was now in a vice like grip between the hedges either side, which prevented any of us getting out of the car (not to mention the active child lock) so that we might reduce the weight and save the under-belly, and more importantly, the stainless-steel exhaust.



While all this was going on, Paul was looking on, and took the wise decision to turn around.

Another con-flab ensued between Neil and Darren, as to which was the correct track. After both drivers skilfully made their way back to the main road they soon

found a similar track, which this time was the correct one, however it's condition was similar to the previous one. That being said, the party eventually got as far up the track as possible, which saved an hour off the walk to the mine.

Once kitted up, it's roughly a 30-minute walk to the derelict buildings, and the group soon found the air shaft entrance. As others were sorting gear I started to rig the straight-forward descent of the shaft, which was approximately 15 metres deep.







As you descend, you pass over a couple of short iron ladders partly bolted together. On reaching the bottom, I was quickly off the rope and was suddenly joined by a 'nesting' bat flying about, checking out this intruder of the dark. Paul, Neil, Dan, Rob, Gaz and Darren made their way down, with Darren taking the lead into the mine. We had only ventured in 50 metres or so when Neil informed us he had



lost his 'Go-Pro' camera. So it was that Dan would become Neil's knight in shining armour, as at the end of the trip, Dan found the lost item amongst the rocks close to the shaft bottom.

Now this mine doesn't look that big a venture, if the spoil heaps are anything to go by, but by heck, does it have some huge galleries ! This is as a direct result of the mine being worked for 'slab'. The mine opened in the 1870s, and eventually was being worked on 7 levels, before closing in 1960 due to the lack of men willing to work in such a remote location.

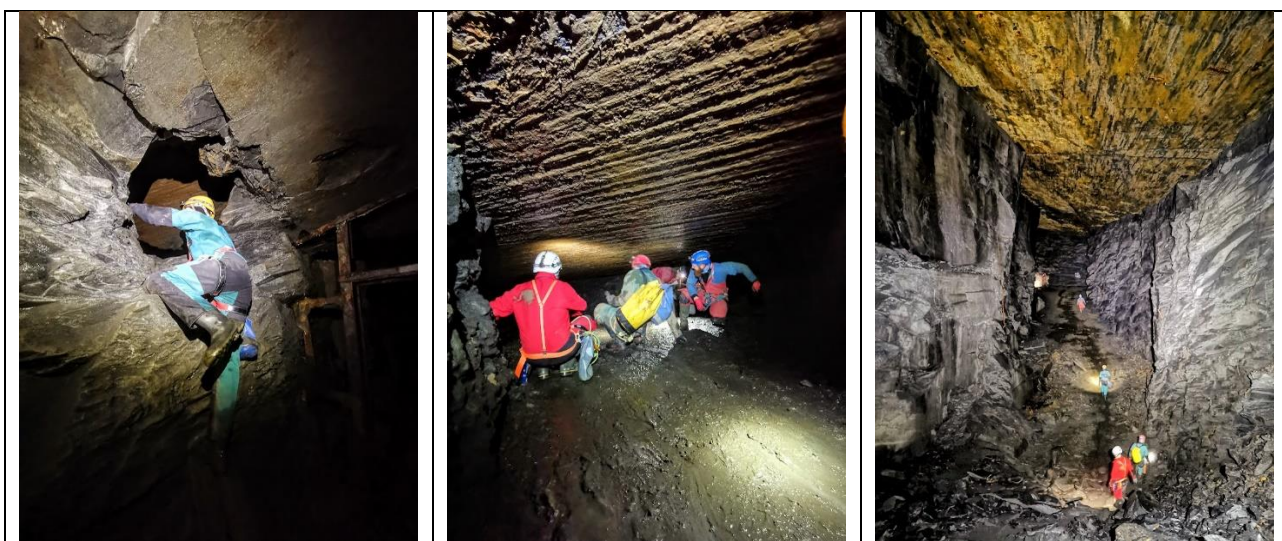
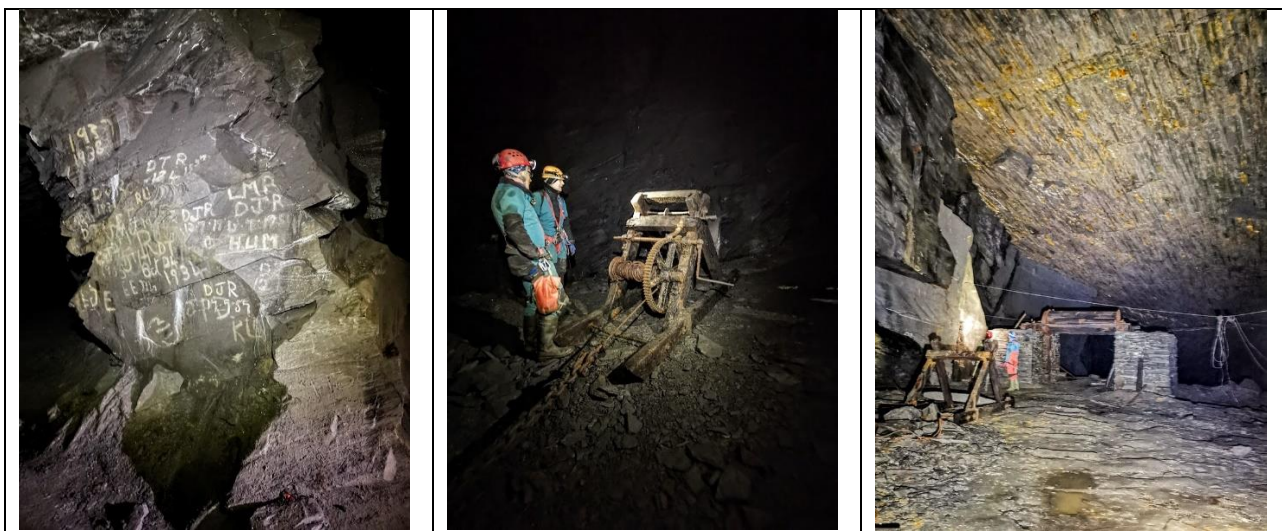


Most of the equipment used was removed when the mine was closed, but a few pieces remain to remind the visitor of its past. We came across a vintage air pump, an oil can, switch gear, a wooden tier for winches for hauling the slabs


of slate, rail sleepers, air pipes, a drum house and wheel, and lots of miners' graffiti, the earliest being dated to 1906.

There is very impressive wooden and stone 'crib' supporting the fractured chamber roof on level 6. Traversing one of the levels, Darren pointed out a small window about 6 feet off of the floor on the right wall, which he remembered was the way on for the through trip. We continued along the level until we reached a fore-field, then made our way back to the climb up into a low hands and knees passage, trending down dip ( thanks goes to Dan for spotting this for me on the return). On reaching the end of the ventilation passage, Darren was disappointed to find that most of the in-situ chain had gone, preventing us from dropping into the chamber below. We later came across a short ladder climb which led into a chamber; this was the same chamber we had viewed from above, at the end of the ventilation passage.





At some point in the trip the party stumbled across the “bridge of death”, suspended over a 25-metre drop, with most of the walkway planks missing or rotten, and held aloft by seven very old and very rusty cables. All this however did not deter the mighty Gaz, who had no hesitation. The rest of us thought better of it, and waited for him to return safely.



Expertly guided by

Darren and Neil, we made our way down to the lower levels which were taking water and partly flooded. Not wanting to go wading we made our way back, until we eventually connected to the main adit. Having spent four hours underground it was time to make our way out, and once Neil had derigged, we were soon on our way down the hill, beating the rain in the process. The obligatory pub-stop on the way home completed another very enjoyable trip for all.

## Steve Pearson-Adams

*Photographs courtesy of Gaz Mcshee.*







## **Jug Holes, Derbyshire.**

**Saturday, 20<sup>th</sup> April 2024**

So the much-anticipated trip into Five Ways Pot didn't go ahead, due mainly to members having other commitments, and some feeling under the weather. I could certainly be counted as being in the latter. Still I was determined to get underground on Saturday and so it was I sent a message out alerting members to my idea of a trip into Jug Holes above Matlock off of Salters Lane.

There was one victim who answered my call.

Paul Griffiths and I made the journey over to Derbyshire in good time. The lane was fairly quiet, so parking wasn't an issue. Jug Holes would be a first for Paul, so I decided we would investigate the upper entrance which leads to the Beehives, and then drop down the slope and join the stream. We could then follow it to its termination, before heading back up-stream, and re-entering the chamber, close to the inclined crawl that would take us back to the entrance pitch to this part of the system. Before heading down the path to enter the adit, I rigged the middle entrance for SRT (it would be our exit on the return), not that SRT is needed, as the 10-metre pitch is free-climbable with care. I did however want to check out the gated shaft which lies off to the right of the path going down the hill. This shaft lands you on the floor of the adit, approximately 30 metres in from the entrance. On this occasion, the 15-metre rope was too short, not reaching the bottom and not leaving enough to rig with either, so this plan was abandoned. I did leave the rope hanging so that we could later check how short it was, from reaching the floor. We calculated it was a couple of metres short, so a 25-metre rope would do it.

Steadily, Paul and I made our way from one Water Cavern to the next, while taking in some of the natural features, and evidence of the mining activity of years gone by. Paul led out from Cavern 3 into 2, and soon we were standing at the foot of the rope which I had rigged earlier. Paul was first up, with me following on behind. Paul derigged and we were soon heading back up the hill to the car. An enjoyable trip of about 3 hrs in total.

**Steve Pearson-Adams**



## **Giant's Hole, Derbyshire.**

**Sunday, 5<sup>th</sup> May 2024**

Giants Hole was the first place I went underground with CCPC, as Steve P-A started to teach me the ropes, and I have since been in a couple of times, but not done the infamous Crabwalk. When it came up on the meets calendar I had to take the opportunity to tick Derbyshire's sideways cave off my to-do list. Only problem: the date was my Wedding Anniversary, so some grovelling, housework, and a visit to the florist were in order first, to secure my day pass!

Jenny Drake and Rob Nevitt took on the responsibility for my hazing, so on a sunny Sunday morning we left Crewe to pick up Jenny from Castleton. It's a wonder we made it at all, as the idiot drivers were out, including one fool who was driving the wrong way up the off ramp to join a dual carriage way !

Made it we did, and Castleton was heaving. It's good to see so many people out enjoying the outdoors. We did a drive by pick up of Jenny, and five minutes later we were getting kitted up for the day's adventure.

Giants Hole has an almost 'Disneyesque' entrance, surrounded by green fields, it is a stereotypical cave opening in the rock, with a stream leading into the darkness. Today it was only a gentle stream, indicating we would have an easy day with the streamway. Still, even with lower water levels, Garlands Pot is no less impressive, with the stream pouring over the top and roaring into the hole below.

Rob soon had the pot rigged and we quickly made our way down into the belly of the giant.

Entering the Crabwalk, we all assumed our chosen side forwards. I wonder if there is some psycho- babble as to which side you choose to lead with ? ! Mine was left side forward, so left foot out, right foot follows; left foot out, right foot follows; left foot out, right foot follows... It really is impressive how water can carve such a path through rock. The high walls, twists, and turns, and with smooth scalloping like dragon scales, and under our feet it flows still, carving ever deeper. We all made swift progress through the winding passages - my particular favourite being when they make a complete U-turn - until we reached the Vice, causing us to pause as the narrow passage, ...narrowed ! Rather than squeeze our bodies through, we got our first wetting, as we got into the stream way to slip through under it.

Past the next couple of waterfalls, down the iron ladder and the tunnels took on a different character as we breathed a sigh in 'Great Relief Passage', and on into the Eating House.

After a short break for a drink and a breather we continued. Crawling through a rather annoying waterfall that just wanted to send water down your neck, like a mini carwash. The handline climb up to Maggin's Rift offered a change of action, and the passages felt much larger. We headed up through Poached Egg Passage to take a look at the 'standard edition digging kit' left by the connection to Oxlow. A challenge for another day...

A little way back we reached the signs for the Giants Windpipe. Now I had read about this crawl, but somehow failed to grasp the part where it said, 'body deep-water', so I wasn't prepared for a swim. I always seem to forget how cold cave water is, but that memory soon came flooding back as my suit filled up! Catching my breath we glided through the tunnel, but we tunnelled a little too well, as we reached an end that wasn't the way on [*Handshake Crawl – Ed.*]. Back into the tunnel to take the right way, and shortly we came out on top of the Crabwalk. The passage there is wide and open yet below your feet is the rather deep rift that leads down to the stream below. It looks a long way down when you are straddling it, even if you would probably get stuck between the walls before you reached the bottom.

Giants has one last surprise to throw at you before you can exit:

'The Keyhole' - a calcite hole that requires you to squeeze through, headfirst, looking down into the depth of the rift as you contort yourself till you can get your feet back underneath you on the other side. It gave quite a little rush, before a steady walk on, until we reached a point where we could slide between the walls of the rift, back down to the floor, and on to the bottom of Garlands.

Up the rope, trying to avoid the water cascading down, with Jenny de-rigging, and we were soon back out into the spring sunshine. It's very pleasant getting changed with the sun on your back instead of the winds and rain we have had of late, and with that, our date with the Giant was done. It didn't disappoint and I'm sure I will be back.

**Paul Griffiths**

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#### **D.C.A. Catchment Representative Scheme – Hamps / Manifold area :**

This new system is based on the introduction of **catchment representatives** (club or individuals) who will help to monitor a catchment and **be reactive to any issues** that might arise concerning access and conservation. This system is still in its formative stage.

As previously arranged, **CCPC** Members already carry out any basic maintenance work required to manage the vegetation at the discrete parking area in the copse close to Waterways Swallet, near Blore and Ilam – usually annually. This is a requirement of the access agreement.

Much of the Hamps / Manifold area which is of interest to cavers is owned and managed by the National Trust, and any cave or mine related 'project' activity will need to be carried out with the permission and approval of The National Trust (and/or other landowners where appropriate). This has been successfully arranged for a number of projects in the past, but will need to be carefully managed in the future to ensure the relationship is not compromised. This would be most effectively done by the approved DCA Conservation Officer.

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**Editor's Final Comment (Again !)** :- There would be no Newsletter without the contributions made by Members. Please keep writing in your own style, and leave it to me to mess it up ! **Ed.**