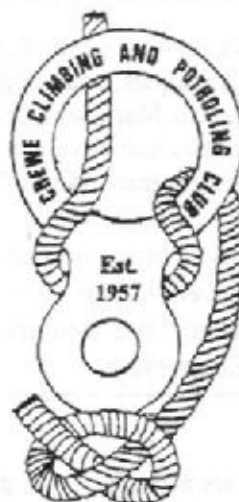


C.C.P.C.

Newsletter 67.

Oct. 2000.



Includes "First Aid for Cavers"

A Blast From The Past - August 1979

Maskhill-Oxlow-Giants: Tony Gamble and Tony Reynolds

Descended Maskhill at 1030 am using 200' of rope for the first 2 pitches, 300' for the 3rd, 4th and 5th and 150' for the 6th (waterfall) pitch. (This would have been 11mm - probably "Blue Water" -Ed.) Straight forward trip through Maskhill except on 6th pitch where Tony R. had to descend about 90' and swing across about 15' into Oxlow West Chamber. We left our prussiking gear in an ammo tin and set off through West Chamber to the 40' ladder into Pilgrims Way and on to The Connection.

The first squeeze was very tight as the passage had silted up, some of this was removed before the return. Now to test Tony R's string wet suit. (ie full of holes! -Ed.) A fairly quick crawl until we came to the water, only 2" air space. This was passed with three short dives. T.R. had to taste the stuff-like thin mud. Another 100' and out into Poached Egg Passage-relief. There's no need for ventilation in elbows and knees!

On to Geology and East Canal. That's half of it, now we've got to get back. With T.R. still trying to warm up we set off back for the connection, the thought of that water didn't help, it's cold. On through the connection and along Pilgrims Way through West Chamber. Next Mars bars then up Waterfall Pitch. Packed my gear into ammo then dropped it back down again! After getting my gear out we made our way out as quickly as possible. Trouble getting gear up the 3rd pitch. When I got out it was dark (surprise, surprise! -Ed.) so had to rush down to the car and turn my lights on then go back to help haul gear up the entrance shaft. By now it was 10.30 p.m. We had to make a quick change to get a pint before closing.

10½ hours caving. If you think it's easy, try it! But don't ask me to go with you.

Tony Gamble

Video Evening

A showing of some of Dave Webb's videos and a meal have been arranged for Sat 30th September at the "Miners Standard", Winstar. Camping is available and (if you are quick enough) so is accommodation. No doubt some caving will take place during the weekend.

Eldon Hole

Thanks must go out to Rob, Steve E., Alan and Mark Smith for removing the animal remains (2 bags puppies, adult dog and numerous rabbits) from the bottom of Eldon. Particular thanks must go to Mark who spent a good part of the morning up to his armpits in the remains resulting in him having to spend the afternoon in a bath of neat Detol rather than doing a "round trip" in Giants with the others!!

Jenny Potts, on behalf of DCA, thanks all those involved in any way with the work (fencing, stile building, site clearance, additional fence repairs, etc, at Eldon Hole.



Fancy a Curry?

Plans are afoot for a group of us to visit NE India in Feb 2001. If you have read the articles in Descent you will already know that quite a bit has already been discovered with both horizontal and vertical development akin to typical Yorkshire systems. We would work as a unit attached to a larger expedition consisting of Hungarians, French, Americans plus any other groups who "sign up". Someone with local knowledge would be assigned to us to help locate systems and help with any language difficulties. All meals are provided, transport in all-terrain vehicles and accommodation is in "guest houses" which if they anything like those in Pakistan will be basic. Cost (including flight) around £1000.

Interested? Contact Matt or Ralph.

Other suggestions have been- a trip to Russia (Ukraine) in August, this costs about the same but gives folks longer to save up or, we could be really boring and go to Europe!!

Cavers Fair



Personally I felt the turn out was low and could have done with more grass route support. Tom prepared a first aid session he did not have to deliver through total lack of cavers, Ralph, assisted by an almost comatose Matt, (as a result of Kev's party!!) did a day on "ladder and line" and Nigel was asked at VERY short notice to run the "explosives" session as Nick Williams was unable to attend. Mark L. attended Dave Webb's video-making session -hopefully the club will shortly be on TV!!

Castleton Street Collection

£106 97 was raise-almost £100 of it in the "Crewe" session which ended at 12ish. Surprisingly Gareth's tin had the most in it- despite giving the appearance of spending the morning chatting up the local talent. Thanks to those who took part.



Hypothermia Crawl

Mat has made two visits to Hypothermia Crawl on his last one reaching the same point as Stan Kowalik and Mick Stratford in 1975 which they named "Crewe Junction". Nothing seems to have changed- the crawl is still horribly wet and tight (but not for Mat!) and the aven and boulder choke still need further investigation! It remains an unpopular, rarely visited location! Stan's original write up follows overleaf;

No sense and good luck at Rowter Hole

Driven to Rowter Hole by vivid visualisation of entering Speedwell Caverns from above and by a "back door", Mick and myself, in high spirits, equipped with an entrenching tool, luck and ciggys prepared ourselves for the descent of the main shaft. As we were about to descend we were accosted by a stranger who called himself Ben an who, by his own description was a fanatical "digger" belonging to some minor club, Orpheus or the suchlike. After trying to persuade us that Rowter had no potential, and failing he asked if he might join us, well anything for a quiet life and so that we could get started we agreed and he dashed off to his abode (a chicken shack) at the farm to get changed. Meanwhile Mick and myself made our decent and began making prelim exams around the bottom, as we were going to leave no area in Rowter untouched, Ben joined us while we were pottering and so we decided to show him (and allow him to assist) our potential digging place.

Now for all of you that have not yet visited Rowter, on the way to the twin shafts where we were heading, water enters the mine on the left wall at a high level through an extremely tight narrow bedding plane that in the words of Dave Elliot (Ref: Caves of N. Derbyshire part one) "is easily reached by climbing but becomes too low after a few feet" which is an understatement and in the words of Stan Kowalik is bloody impassable wet and uncomfortable, but this day (I've been to have a look before) we had Ben with us, and I was in a posing mood, I climbed up to show him just how tight it was, but because of my mood and with the help of our spade cum pick I realised that if six inches of calcite floor could be removed we could gain a two foot extension which would enable me to peer around the 90° left hand bend the water took. With battery and helmet removed (its that tight) I scraped away, and after a few minutes managed to effect and opening just large enough for me to force entry where I was able to see round the bend (no pun) "It goes" came back my excited little voice "if you struggle" What my eyes beheld was a passage, no a slit roughly the same cross sectional as a Jap's eye and approximately the same size (actually about six to eight inches high in the middle, where the eyeball should be) and blocked off in places by fragile stals. Without thought of how I was going to back off, save finding a passing place I started to worm my way up, dragging my lamp behind me inch by inch. With lots of grunts and groans behind me, I imagined Mick was following my lead, as Ben had no wetsuit and the passage had two inches of water in it, but I was mistaken. Mick had tried and failed to get in, and Ben being somewhat smaller in diameter and so excited by this find (also because he must have been somewhat of a case) had followed me in. Anyway with a forced draught blowing in my face and the impossibility of retreating backwards, off I went at my snail's pace followed ten minutes behind by Ben, whom I could not see. With so much effort forcing myself up that passage I find it hard to recall an accurate description of total distance covered but I imagine (after close collaboration with both Mick and Ben) I must have travelled at least two, perhaps three hundred feet in a westerly direction, which although I would not dare to suggest, even think is towards Giants'. There are also two more 90° bends which, although like a dog's leg still makes due west, and one extremely tight lump in the floor, which collects water on the one side of it, and makes avoiding getting your face wet impossible. With the water on the floor reflecting the light of my cap lamp, it kept giving an illusion that a yard further would be the start of the passage opening up, so after such illusions all the way along it was with relief and excitement, when the passage did open up, large enough to stand, then crawl up a slope and small waterfall into a large cavern decorated with beautiful formations. I attempted to shout down the passage of the find, but the answer back was unintelligible indicating that the person following was way back and at least ten minutes away, so I decided to explore very carefully.

This new cavern was actually the junction of two passages one left (west) and the other right (east) the easterly was the one I could hear water cascading so that became the priority, but disappointingly seemed to end in a calcited boulder choke after a few yards with the water pouring down from its heights, knowing boulder chokes of old I retreated to leave that for a second opinion from Mick who I still imagined worming his way up the passage, still a good

distance off too by the gurgled moanings, so I had a look up the westerly passage. Its extent is perhaps ten yards with all interesting bits in it, including a solid wall of mud that indicated that at least the place was never entirely submerged in recent times, even in flood. From what appeared the limit of this cavern, by facing back down and looking up, a climbable aven was observed and a large proportion of the draught I had felt in the passage. Assuming my partner must be close I went back to the start or ending of the passage to give vocal assistance to the crawler. I was really taken aback when Ben showed his face two minutes later, he had taken on a deathly pallor and was obviously starting to suffer from exposure, teeth chattering and spasms of shivers that visibly rocked him from side to side, his "tee" shirt was upped from his back caused by the bits of stal that had taken lumps out of the back of my wetsuit. It was plain to see, and he knew himself that he'd never get down the way he'd come so the only hope was my wetsuit. I knew if he got warm he might make it so he donned on my jacket and within minutes the change that came over him was incredibly swift, in fact I thought just a ruse to obtain my warmth, but really, a lesson showing the dangers of exposure, and the use of the light clothing. What to do? that was the poser, seeing him come out of the passage like that convinced me I wouldn't like to try it without wetsuit so the only solution was for him to get out with my jacket on, give it to Mick, and try to force him up the hole with it, while Ben shot to the surface to get his wetsuit. On this we agreed so off he went, while I was left behind to keep warm.

About things that appear impossible, when there is desire to do it, most impossible becomes possible, and what was impossible for Mick to achieve at start became his achievement once Ben told his story and had given back my jacket.

Mick was back with me in double quick time, much faster than I'd thought could be achieved and after putting my wetsuit back on and the blood become liquid again I thought he deserved a kiss but shook his hand instead.

After showing Mick the finds of which the junction I'd called "Crewe Junction" and we'd mutually agreed to call the passage "Hypothermia Crawl", we retreated.

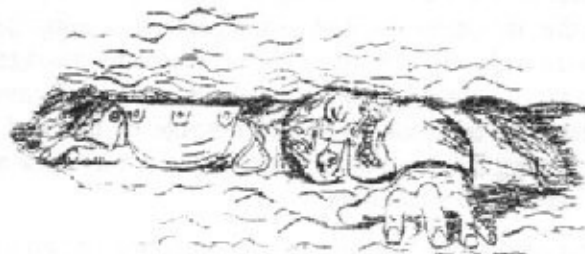
Ben was awaiting our exit and after a ciggy we motored back to the surface by this time Ben was really excited, apparently he'd been digging around for ten years professionally (he was on the dole) and was reckoning this find was the best of Derbyshire's last ten year's finds. After settling him on the names "Crewe Junction" and "Hypothermia Crawl" we gave him permission to invite Paul Deakin, the photographer from Eldon, to photograph "Crewe Junction".

At the present time of writing we have no idea if the find has been entered again for photographs or anything else, because shortly after this trip the draught suddenly ended very dramatically, and as the passage "Hypothermia Crawl" is a water course, and a tight one at that, we assumed, although this is not known fact, that it may take a larger volume of water, and if this is the case, two inches more water down that place would make it impassable and also a pretty dangerous place to be as the water would tend to back up against your large obstruction. Now it is needed to know, does the volume of water increase? and where does that aven go? also is the boulder choke passable?

Any member of the club weighing no more than 160lbs wet through is more than welcome to extend our knowledge, in the mean time I await a favourable time that I can go in again myself.

(Party, Mick Stratford, "Digger" Ben [Keith Bentham -Ed.], Myself)

A.S.Kowalik, April 1975



Sketch of Ben in the
"Hypothermia Crawl"
passage (Hypothermia Crawl)

Oxlow (Comments sent to DCA)

Dear Jenny,

As Ralph has said, Lionel (Parkinson) & I had a look at the unstable slope between the 1st & (old!) 2nd pitch in Oxlow yesterday. As I'm sure we all know the whole area is a mess! I suspect the whole area is a back filled stope all the way from the base of the entrance shaft to the base of the ginging of the 2nd pitch, a vertical distance of some 130ft. through tailings, to clay. Just for good measure there's water running through the lot, not a nice combination. It represents an old decaying industrial problem which to make good properly would require industrial sized resources. Therefore anything we could do within financial & logistical constraints is likely to be a stop-gap at best. The top of the slope is overhung by several large boulders which seem stable enough but their presence would probably prevent any blasting to stabilise the slope, for fear of sealing the place for ever. Looking down the slope (all refs. to right/left will be from this direction) the stope fades at 10-15deg from R to L the LH side therefore being the hanging wall.

10ft(ish) from the shaft base is the large slump repaired by Crewe some 10 or more yrs. ago. This repair consists of heavy galv. 4in angle across the top & a 6in rsj 5ft below bolted between the stope walls. Heavy timber packing is between these but this is now rotten & the packing by the LH wall has gone completely...this is directly under the P bolts at the (new) pitch head & just where you stand to get on/off the rope! Below the rsj the collapse has gone a further 5ft vertically, the (unsupported) lower bit is big boulders in a wet clay wall. A 10ft high wet clay & boulder wall is not going to stand for ever & may well collapse when someone gets on or off the pitch.

About 15-20ft lower down the slope is a timber jammed across the stope, it is undermined by water washing material from beneath it & could do with replacement. More seriously, a large piece of the hanging (LH) wall is starting to come away at this point. This is moving now! Part of the crack is covered with wet sloppy clay & the crack is clearly defined in the over lying clay. I suggest advising people to avoid this area for the time being (just keep to the opposite wall). It may be possible to wall bolt this bit or just blast the dodgy bit off.

Back to the 10ft drop. Half way between the current bottom & the rsj, the walls are in good nick & even have shallow holes (pre back-filling?) in appropriate places, so another rsj could be fitted here (measurements taken). The bottom itself is a different matter. The hanging wall is under-cut & obscured by back-fill, so a better option may be to dig out the back fill drill both walls, ss bolt them & cast a reinforced concrete lintel across (approx. 0.6 cu M) in one operation. The drop could then be built up with blocks & heavy steel mesh to allow the water out. Quite a big job. Alternatively go with Ralph, bolt a traverse down the RH wall & let gravity take its course!

Cheers, Nigel

NB: We have also suggested a bolt to replace the VERY old rawlbolt set into the concrete surrounding the lid. -Ralph

Thanks Again!!!

I have received a further letter from DCA thanking all those involved in removing the decaying animal remains from Eldon Hole.

Well, may be one day!!

Having discovered that in nearly 10 years of caving Gareth had never been down P8 we decided to remedy this. In an effort to resurrect our Wednesday evenings out Mark, Gareth and I sent off having arranged to meet on of the new members Colin at the lay-by.

Following a prompt start from Macclesfield we headed for Perryfoot full of enthusiasm despite the torrential rain that had fallen all day. We arrived at the lay-by to find Colin surrounded by two other parties, one a bunch of beginners, some 10 to 15 people in total.

Mark tried to suggest that taking a lot of novices down P8 in those conditions was not a very good idea but this was greeted with the response that one party was led by someone from DCRO. This turned out to be Howard Taylor, an old pal of mine from way back. We saw chaos ahead; so on with plan B. Gautries, poor Gareth would just have to wait for another day to do P8.

An easy trip in to the first chamber was in surprisingly low water for the amount of rain that had fallen over the last two days. The low crawl to Angle chamber was also quite dry but the puddles were still mightily cold on the tackle (bags that is). A quick pull on the hand line put us in the passage to the duck. Much to our amazement it was dry with only a few mm of water in the bottom so a full soaking was avoided.

A ladder was rigged to make the climb back from the main chamber and soon we were all by the Dam at the terminal sump. The tube at the side is usually sumped after 3 or 4 metres but I could see way beyond this and I was soon engaged in a wallow in mud. About 8 metres of passage followed to a muddy blockage with an opening to the right, which even Matt could not fit, through but from which the sound of running water could be heard. This is definitely worth another look at.

In the meantime Colin was attacking the main sump, which was completely dry. After a few minutes work shovelling sand he was able to wiggle through feet first to find that there was a low passage beyond. As now of us brave soles fancied the prospect of going after him if he got stuck we suggested he left this for another day when we can bring some gear with. As the guide says this sump is blind this may be worth getting the club involved. The generally low level of water in the cave was very surprising give the fact that it had rained heavily for 2/3 days prior to our visit and we wondered if the storms of the winter had cleared a blockage lower down the system.

On the way out a look down the passage beyond angle chamber showed that the sump was some 15 metres lower than normal. A climb down a pitch I have never seen before led to a small continuation before the sump was seen. Yet another change. !!

Back though the puddles Colin and Gareth had a play down the first section of the cave where the pipes are still sluicing and then of to the Pub to listen to the Folk singing and to drink the odd beer or two, or three or four in Mark case. Maybe not P8, but we had a very interesting night out.

John Martin

Forthcoming Meets

Sunday 10 th September	Ogof Hesp Alyn	(North Wales)
Saturday 23 rd September	Lost Johns	(Leck Fell)
Sunday 1 st October	Pos trip J H	(Bradwell)
Sunday 8 th October	Bagshaw Cavern	(Bradwell)
Saturday 21 st October	Parys Mountain	(Anglesey)
Saturday 28 th October	Out Slets Beck	(Penyghent Fell)
Saturday 11 th November	Stump Cross Caverns	(Patley Bridge)
Saturday 25 th November	Hillocks/Knotlow/exchange	(Monyash)
Sunday 3 rd December	Lathkill head	(Monyash)

Check also the current DCRO newsletter for training and social events. Nigel Atkins is organising an SRT training event at Pindale "sometime before Christmas", and there are of course weekly digging and general last minute trips going on, if you're not sure what's happening, ring around.

In view of the trip which Nigel is organising and following a recent trip to Anglesey, I thought you might be interested in seeing the following text which forms part of a publicity leaflet available.

~John

PARYS MOUNTAIN COPPER MINES AMLWCH, ANGLESEY

A BRIEF HISTORY OF THE MINES.

It was not until the mid-eighteenth century that the first major ore deposit of the modern industrial era (the "Golden Venture Lode") was discovered by Jonathan Roose. His tombstone and eulogy may be seen today in Amlwch churchyard. At this time the mountain was divided between two owners leading to the development of adjoining mines, the Mona Mine to the East (owned by an ancestor of the present Marquess of Anglesey) and Parys Mine to the West.

The copper from these two mines dominated the world's markets in the 1780's. It was used to sheath the admiral's ships of war, in order to prevent the growth of seaweed and barnacles and to prevent boring by worms. This increased their manoeuvrability and made possible Nelson's victories. The post-war slump and diminishing accessible ore reserves, together with competition from cheaper

ores abroad, led to the decline of the mines and to the end of deep mining in the 1880's.

The ore was initially worked on the surface from shallow shafts and then by open-pit mining (Opencasts) and later underground from adits and from shafts up to 300m deep. The ore was broken into small lumps by hand, the best ore being transported by ship from Amlwch Port to Lancashire or South Wales for smelting. Copper was concentrated and extracted from the remainder using kilns and furnaces on site and at Amlwch Port itself. It was also discovered that purer metal could be obtained efficiently, although in small amounts, by its precipitation from drainage water with scrap iron in purpose-built ponds. Associated with the mines, other important chemical industries were established on the mountain based on by-products, such as ochre pigments, sulphur, vitriol and alum.

The 18th Century miners recognised that they were following in the steps of much earlier workers, an observation that was linked to the discovery locally of copper ingots bearing Roman inscriptions. Recently, excavations have enabled surface debris to be dated to nearly four thousand years ago, (the early Bronze Age), and access has also been regained to the sealed underground workings of Parys mine revealing evidence for this ancient mining. Parys Mountain is thus an addition to the very few sites in Britain, such as the Great Orme, where there is evidence for the prehistoric beginnings of our British metal mining industry. It is therefore internationally important both as a historic mine and as an archaeological site.

GEOLOGY and BIOLOGY OF PARYS MOUNTAIN

The rocks of Parys Mountain originated as muds in the margins of a sea basin around 440 million years ago. At that time submarine volcanoes were erupting lavas and ashes, and the fumes they exhaled produced rich deposits of metals on the sea floor. These metals occur as the sulphide minerals chalcopyrite (copper and iron), galena (lead), sphalerite (zinc), with abundant pyrite (iron), and they form an ore deposit ("Kuroko type") which is unique

in Britain. During later distortion of the earth's crust (the "Caledonian Orogeny" circa 400 million years ago) the ore deposit was deformed by being tilted steeply down to the north, folded (synclinal structure) and fractured (faulting), although this interpretation is currently under revision. During these phases of deformation some of the metals were remobilised, giving rise to a complex ore body.

The weathering of this deposit has produced very acidic conditions (pH \leq 2). The abundant iron has been redeposited in different forms to give the striking red and brown colours of the mountain; there is little surface sign of copper today, but lead was redeposited as its sulphate ("anglesite") for which Parys Mountain is the type locality.

This extreme, harsh, acidic setting has resulted in a unique environment supporting unusual forms of life. Special bacteria derive their energy from the oxidation of sulphides, and a rich flora of special lichens can be found coating rock surfaces, whilst heather survives over most of the mountain. Bats, including the rare lesser horse-shoe bat, have colonised the mine workings, and amongst the birds to be seen soaring with the jackdaws over the opencasts are the red-legged/billed choughs

Not again...

Yes, for those of you who haven't heard, a year after our extended trip down JH, it was felt that Rob (Farmer) and I hadn't been caving with DCRO in a while and so we surfaced from an evening trip down Nettle just in time for a major callout to be avoided. Worse still was that the task of making the callout fell to Steve (Evans) and Paul (Nixon) again. Basically we'd gone underground a lot later than we'd been planning to earlier in the week (it was a hot day...) and conversations then about what time we were going underground led to a callout when neither of us could be raised on the 'phone that evening - despite the fact we'd only just set off. By pure chance we cut short our trip by a couple of hours and averted a full scale rescue. Moral of the story, even if you think you're not expected out until late, make sure someone obvious has a definite call-out time - even when it means ringing someone at 2am just to say you're OK! (steady relationships do have a role to play in caving after all...) Rob and I haven't been outright banned from caving in Derbyshire yet, although the fact that we've been asked to leave a date as our call-out time in future and that we've only been caving as a pair in Yorkshire since then does have an element of truth! Incidentally, Crumble and Beza pot make for a classic Yorkshire trip in Derbyshire and come highly recommended, even if The Shakes are reminiscent of an unstable, s**t filled Derbyshire again when you reach the bottom.

-Matt

www.ccpc.org.uk

With apologies for those people with no access to the Internet...

The long needed big update to the website is about to happen, it will again be at least vaguely up-to-date again (too much caving...). We're now on commission for another couple of websites although nothing that's going to make the club rich overnight. All of the schemes work by paying us for links people make to their sites from ours, so if you're visiting any of the sites below, please remember to go via the club homepage. Why not make www.ccpc.org.uk YOUR homepage?



amazon.co.uk are an on-line bookstore and will pay us 5-15% commission on all goods bought. I've made a page listing all the caving books they sell (www.ccpc.org.uk/books), so if anyone has read any of them and fancies writing a line or two about them then feel free. With a bit of work we can be selling books to cavers throughout the world and making a reasonable sum of money out of it. Amazon is an established online retailer and by far the biggest online bookstore in the UK and worldwide. They sell lots more besides books, including CDs, videos and software, all at a discount prices. Be aware that you will have to pay for delivery though. They offer unrivalled customer service and I wouldn't hesitate to recommend them to anyone.

Google is an intelligent web search engine and will pay us a whole American cent for each search conducted from our website. If you've ever tried and failed to find something on the Internet then give Google a try - it returns much more useful results than other search engines.

keepAhead.com is the service Ralph and I use to get the weather forecast delivered free every morning by e-mail. The forecast is regional and fairly comprehensive, plus seemingly no less accurate than anything else. The company offers literally hundreds of such services if you think you'd like more mail.

LED lighting - An Electric Carbide ?

John Martin has been investigating these new LED bulbs which take a lot of the hassle out of constructing a very alternative light source. He received the following e-mail from John Biffin who is manufacturing them for cavers in the UK,

Sorry for delayed reply, I have just arrived back in UK. Dragon and Inglesport are both selling the led bulbs, or I can sell them direct. The cell packs and chargers are currently available from me. The LED bulbs are available in a number of formats, and the popular variants are shown below with retail prices. If you have any questions, feel free to telephone me on [REDACTED] (eve), [REDACTED] (day), [REDACTED] (mobile).

Regards

John Biffin

LED pilot bulb (1 led), mes, 4 volt nominal.	£6
LED pilot bulb (1 led), mes, 6 volt nominal.	£6
LED main bulb (7 led), mes, 4 volt nominal.	£30
LED bulb (3 led), mes, 4 volt nominal	£15
LED bulb (3 led), pf, 4 volt nominal.	£15
LED bulb (3 led), pf, 6 volt nominal.	£15
NiMh cell packs, 4.2 volt approx, 3.8 Ah	£26
Charger for above	£12

Pictures of the above are available at <http://ledtechno.homepage.com/index.html>

There has also been considerable recent discussion (31st August 2000) of these bulbs, and of LED lighting in general, in the uk.rec.caving internet newsgroup. Archives can be viewed at <http://www.deja.com/group/uk.rec.caving>

Inglesport appear to be hiring out LED equipped headsets now, so this is something you may like to try before committing to buying such a device.