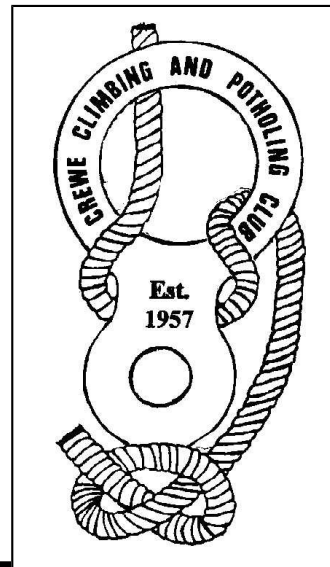


C.C.P.C. Newsletter 93. Spring 2008

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Mike Scott (Scottie)

Sadly on 11 December we learned of the death of Mike Scott who died of cancer in November. Mike was a founder member of CCPC, he was its first secretary and a driving force in the early days of the club. Mike was a determined sort of guy (to the point of obstinacy) and “was a man of few words” who never tolerated fools lightly. I recall the pair of us being stopped and questioned by a reporter after the Neil Moss Incident, he asked us what we saw--“F ***** fairies” was Mike’s quick response! Apparently the next day following headline appeared in the local rag; **RESCUERS HAVE HALLUCINATIONS!**

We met in the scouts at the age of eleven and remained firm friends ever since. In the late 50s/early 60s Mike probably invented “gap years” and “backpacking”. Frequently he would disappear often unannounced for months on end. If she was lucky Mike’s mother would get the odd post card from places never heard of. He would reappear some time later tanned and somewhat slimmer with tales of eating sheep’s eyeballs and other obnoxious meals rather than face the wrath of his Bedouin hosts!

On another occasion he was stony broke on one of the Greek Islands. His only way to finance his trip home was to donate blood, apparently there was no limit to how much one could give so Mike did a few rapid calculations as to how many pints paid his fare home--needless to say on that occasion he arrived home looking rather anaemic but several pints of Guinness (applied internally) soon put him right.

Eventually he left for Uni where he became president of the Mountaineering Club. The old Tremadoc Guide lists several of his first ascents. He organised a trip to Norway in a battered old army lorry they had acquired. Sadly a road accident prevented their arrival at the planned destination and Mike ended up in a German hospital with a badly damaged arm badly cut and burned with battery acid and in the fire that destroyed the vehicle. The hospital patched him up then demanded payment. Mike solved this by legging it over the wall and travelling back to the UK for further treatment. Sadly the gap in treatment did nothing to improve the condition of his injury.

The tendons in his arm were severed and infected. After various operations on his tendons followed by skin grafts he was left with a hand that could close but not open properly. This was time to move on so he abandoned climbing and caving and spent almost his entire

working life teaching abroad. He always seemed to choose the wrong country, his biggest disaster being a teacher in Uganda when Idi Amin took over! He managed to leave but only managed to recover part of his assets by posting them to his many friends in the UK in parcels marked with “to” but not “from”!

He was a “traveller” before travelling was popular and I lost count of the countries he worked in and “occupations” he chose, from landscape photographer through artist via yacht chartering to programmer and lecturer – he did ‘em all with such enthusiasm and intensity that left his friends gasping for breath!

In the end he was diagnosed as terminally ill and in true Scott fashion turned down the offer of chemotherapy. He was given a few months but only lasted a few weeks. I received a cheque for CCPC from his wife today (she was following Mike’s instructions). Those who new him will recall that he never showed any emotion and his feelings were always kept to himself, I felt guilty that I was unable to visit him in his last few weeks but I suppose that was Mike- he wanted me and his other friends to remember him as he was – he hated any show of affection so he departed this world quietly at home, his funeral was a civil ceremony performed at the house with few people present.

He will be sadly missed by those who new him, Ralph J.

Cow’s tails.

For those who couldn’t read the (French) article on cow’s tails here’s Alan’s contribution. Ready-made lanyards, such as those currently available in the shops, whether single, double or of even or uneven lengths, are unsuitable for either caving or rope access. Lanyards made from sewn slings, like those commonly used by cavers and climbers, are particularly dangerous. Tests have shown that a FF1 fall can generate a force equivalent to 1500 daN - the European standard for work equipment is set at 600 daN.

[NB daN = Deka-Newton = 10 Newton. A Newton is a unit of force used in the international sytem of units and represents a force of 1 kg m/s².]

None-the-less, it is possible to make use of these lanyards by knotting them to the harness, thus reducing the force generated by a FF1 fall to acceptable levels; indeed various manufacturers intend using lengths of dynamic rope at the sewn ends. It is quite easy to use such a lanyard, 150cm long, to create a pair of varied-length cowstails suitable for either caving or rope access. This should be tied directly into the belay-loop of the harness with a figure-8 knot.

Ralph continues; an overhand knot is acceptable at the “centre” of the cowstails, the best knot for the attachment of the karabiners is a barrel knot (1/2 fisherman’s) Cowstails should be replaced on a regular basis, every two years with light use even if in good visual condition annually with heavy use but sooner than this if they show any sign of wear. (CCPC now holds a stock of 10mm dynamic rope that can be purchased as required).

2008 AGM: This was well attended and pleasantly brief. The only change was that we now have a “Welfare Officer” (Steve Knox) to oversee the welfare of members under the age of 18.

The following advert came from a group of cavers operating in Mallorca, if you're interested you know what to do!

Hello my name is Daniel Mayoral, author of the book " Mallorca, bellezas en la oscuridad", I write from the island of Majorca in Spain written in spanish. We are very satisfied if were publishing as news in your web the characteristics of our book thank you. Our web is <http://english.espeleomallorca.com>
contacto@espeleomallorca.com

"Mallorca, bellezas en la oscuridad" is the practical and visual guide to caving in Majorca Island (Spain).

Characteristics:

- Each cave is presented by an artistic portrait, carried out using different drawing and painting techniques.
- An aerial photo with a superposition of the access and the plan view of the cave, helps to give an idea of the location and surrounding area.
- Detailed access, to the cave with a sketch made to scale and an illustration of the path by means of points, time, pictures and partial coordinates.
- Cross section of the difference of height from the car to the cave.
- Detailed and useful descriptions together with big pictures.
- Technical specifications the cave with spot height of every belay.
- List of the equipment needed to rig the cave as it is suggested. .
- Useful advices to make the visit easier.
- Cave surveys in 2D and 3D with small photos of the key points.

News about the latest explorations made by the Majorcan Caving clubs:

- "Cova de Sa Gleda", the longest underwater cave in Europe (GNM).
- "Cova d'es Coll", a real underwater treasure (GNM)
- "Cova des Pas de Vallgornera", new discoveries to add to this amazing and unique cave in Europe, over 23 km of passageways (GELL).

We also enclose a FREE CD ROM with a compilation of software, surveys, information and lots of stuff useful for cavers.

Furthermore, the CD rom contents the first" Interactive caves inventory of the Balearics", with over 4000 caves that can be looked up easily depending on different criteria.

Multimedia CD ROM, contain, how to use it

Bibliography of interest.

Owlet Hole Mine

Earlier this year, following a safety inspection, it was reported that "something needed doing" about the other of PDMHS's two mine sites, Owlet.

The main problem was a massive leaning slab perched upon and apparently supported by rotten stemples; but there were other issues which became apparent as work on the slab progressed.

The job was contracted to the "Coffin Dodgers", an eclectic bunch seconded from the Crewe Climbing and Potholing Club and the Masson Caving Group whose maturity and unworkmanlike appearance concealed youthful determination and a multitude of skills honed over the mists of time.

An initial assessment concluded that due to its size and position over the main route it should remain in place rather than be forcibly brought down, and so a stone wall was constructed beneath it for added support while a steel brace was pinned against the lower part of the slab

and the opposite wall to reduce the risk of further movement. There was a tense moment when the rotten timber supports were pulled out (remotely!), but to our relief nothing else moved and they came out surprisingly easily.

Our attention then turned to the entrance lid which was rusting and distorted due to earlier abortive attempts to break in. Due to its location at the side of a busy public footpath and the attendant problems of “health and safety” that could arise, we decided to replace it completely with a new one. The old lid was removed with some difficulty and a new steel frame and hinged lid was bolted over the old frame and secured to the concrete rim. Our frequent breaks from work to explain what we were doing to curious passers by confirmed that the majority of the public are interested in our lead mining heritage but sadly appear to know very little about it.

Whilst we were working on the lid we realised to our horror that the iron access ladder was bolted to the old rusty frame by just two rusty bolts - and nothing else for its entire 10m length! To make matters worse the bottom 2m dangled from the upper section attached only by a length of string. This is not to imply criticism of the earlier work since it may have originally been quite adequate for the purpose as an aid to a lifeline assisted descent. However we felt that we could at least make it less likely to collapse. The shaft is quite narrow in parts and awkward to work in, and the rock isn't that good either, but we managed to insert various cross beams and bolts to which we secured the ladder using galvanised steel chain. A stack of unsupported deads was also discovered in the shaft and these were supported on a specially constructed beam with a steel top plate.

Despite the fact that the work we have done has been to the best of our ability it can still only be described as “first aid” since to render the mine completely safe would involve more work and expense than would be viable. However we believe we have gone some way to removing the more obvious hazards but it must be pointed out that we have not examined all sections of the route down. We recommend a lifeline for the entrance and second pitches (a bolt has been placed as backup for the lifeliner on the second pitch) and extreme care should be taken throughout a descent.

It is a very interesting old mine, exhibiting signs of early firesetting and later lead and fluorspar working and we felt that it has been well worth the time and effort spent on it. We hope that the earlier work to stabilise the route down to the bottom (there is a well constructed stone “stepway” connecting the first and second pitches) together with our more recent work will be rewarded by an increase in the number of visitors that it deserves.

We recommend that a team is assembled to thoroughly clean up the entire mine and remove the old timber, plastic and steel from earlier work. This could require at least one skip, and two if the garden gnomes are removed at the same time!
Key for access from the Mining Museum.

Thanks to Ralph Johnson and Steve Knox (CCPC) for making the journey from Biddulph on five separate occasions and for supplying many of the tools needed. Special thanks also to Len Kirkham for advice and for manufacturing and supplying all the metalwork.

David Webb. Masson CG December 2007

Projects.

As you will see from the above article the Owlet Hole work is finally finished. Forthcoming projects are:

To locate and open a second entrance to Water Icicle with a view to improving the ventilation in this old lead mine. (Monyash)

Repairs to the entrance of Perseverance Pot. (Stanley Moor, Buxton)

Eldon PC are interested in doing some work on Veer Shaft (Sparrowpit) and have asked for advice (and possibly assistance) on fitting a new lid.

Len & co. continue their work at an unspecified location.

Following a "collapse" of the boulder choke in Suicide Cave a small group of CCPC members spent a couple of hours relocating some of the distinctly unsafe boulders. The route now goes over the boulder pile and down a short climb rather than through it.

SRT Rescue Course.

The course is now confirmed for Sat 3rd February at Parsons House NGR 270809. The cost will be around a tenner & will consist of an "all day" introduction to SRT session plus two ½ day (am and pm) sessions on advanced SRT rescue. The day starts at 0930 and will end at around 4pm. Please contact Ralph to book your place – even if you have already indicated that you wish to attend.

And for those contemplating a visit to China.

In order to help with your Chinese (should you visit Matt) Grace Chu sent this first lesson all the way from Hong Kong.

Chinese

Sum Ting Wong

Hu Yu Hai Ding

Kum Hia Nao

Tai Ni Po Ni

Wai Yu So Tan

Ai Bang Mai Ni

Chin Tu Fat

Wai So Dim

Wai Yu Mun Ching

No Pah King

Wai Yu Kum Nao

Lei Ying Lo

Wa Shing Ka

Yu Stin Ki Pu

Su Pa

You MUST pronounce the Chinese out loud in order to get the full meaning. I thought it was funny anyway

English

That's not right

Are you harbouring a fugitive?

See me ASAP

Small Horse

Did you go to the beach?

I bumped into a coffee table

I think you need a face lift

It's very dark in here

I thought you were on a diet

This is a tow away zone

Our meeting is scheduled for next week

Staying out of sight

He's cleaning his automobile

Your body odour is offensive

Great

Jan 6 Old Ing /Birkwith Yorks Jan 12 Pikedaw Calamine Yorks Jan 20 Grange Rig Yorks	July 5 Outsleets Beck Yorks & DCRO July 6 Alum –Diccan Yorks July 19 Otter or Little Neath S Wales July 27 Magnetometer Yorks
Feb 2 Old Ash mine Derbys Feb 3 Self-Rescue Course Feb 12 DCRO Trng. Feb 17 Lanc – Easegill Yorks	Aug 3 Meregill Yorks Aug 9 Giants Hole Derbys Aug 13 DCRO Trng Aug 17 Lost Johns Yorks Aug 30 Smeltnill Beck Yorks
March 1 Hagg Gill Yorks March 2 DCRO Trng March 16 Bruntscar Yorks March 29 Nanthead Mine March 30 Nanthead Mine	Sept 3 DCRO Trng Sept 6 DCRO St Coll Sept 7 Birks Fell Yorks Sept 13 DCRO Trng & Team Mtg Sept 20 Notts Pot Yorks Sept 20/21 Hidden Earth. Sept 27 DCRO St Coll
April 1 DCRO Trng April 5 Ms Grace's Lane S Wales April 13 Darren Cilau S Wales April 26 DCRO Trng & AGM	Oct 5 Peak Cavern Derbys Oct 7 DCRO Trng Oct 12 Provi-Dow Yorks Oct 25 Lanc- Easegill Yorks
May 3 Poachers Cave n Wales May 7 DCRO Trng May 11 Devil's Hole Y & DCRO trng May 24 Llanelly Quarry Pot S Wales May 25 Ogof Rhyd Sytch S Wales Jun 3 DCRO Trng Jun 7 Scosca Cave Yorks Jun 8 DCRO St Collection Jun 16 Waterfall Hole Derbys Jun 28 Pasture Gill Yorks	Nov 9 Nettle Pot Derbys Nov 11 DCRO Trng Nov 22 DCRO Whitehall Induction Nov 29 LKE – Rift Pot Yorks & DCRO
	Dec 3 DCRO Trng Dec 7 Holme Bank Ch Mine Derbys Dec 20 Bull Pot Yorks. DCRO Pub Coll

If a trip is considered too difficult for beginners an alternative trip will be arranged in the same area (whenever possible)

Remember this is only an outline programme, there is lots more happening. To find out "Wot's On" keep your eyes on the Yahoo site, come along to the meetings or simply ring around.

There is often something on mid week either daytime or evenings.

The SRT course on Feb 3rd is running at two levels. The programme is flexible but at the moment there is a beginners course running all day & two advanced SRT Rescue courses running AM and PM. The venue is Parsons House Grid Ref. 270809. Cost undecided but with grant aid from CCPC and maybe BCA "not a lot"- I'm guessing that even if we don't get a BCA grant, a grant from "The ROB Farmer Memorial Fund" means the course should cost around a tenner.