

# C.C.P.C.

## Newsletter.

### April '97



No.53

OK so you spotted the deliberate mistake in the last issue, it's the clubs 40<sup>th</sup> year not 50<sup>th</sup>! Just checking to see if you actually read these things. I hope you studied the "insurance" letters, OK so they're boring but nevertheless could be important. Make your feelings known. **I hope you also checked your address etc. on the "call out" sheet.** Please let Steve Knox know of any errors.

**The Berger is on!! Have you sorted out your details with Kev?** It's surprising how quickly time passes. 800m of rope and new tackle sacks have already been purchased.

Have you paid your **subs for '97?** It's more important than ever these days. Without it you are not covered on the clubs insurance policy. It's also important that guests fill in a temporary membership form and pay £2.00 membership to avail themselves of this 3<sup>rd</sup> party cover. Forms are available from Ralph or John Martin.

**Maillon rapides.** We seem to be getting through these like they are going out of fashion!!! Please check your kit and if you feel guilty you can return them (anonymously if you want!!) to Ralph. He guarantees "No questions Asked!!!" Otherwise please be careful with them on future trips.

**If you are involved in a trip where your return is delayed** then it makes sense to ring someone involved in the arrangements. It reduces anxiety for those waiting for news and it could prevent an unnecessary "call out".

Congratulations to Ruth and Gideon who tied the knot (figure8?) thus missing the February meeting!

Don't forget ... Nigel is on the look out for "scrap" metal suitable for use at Holme Bank Chert Mine. No doubt some muscle will also be required!!!

Steve Knox, John P. and Paul Nixon are going to extract the ladder from the 210.

**STOP PRESS.** Ben's new dig has "gone" and now connects with the far reaches of Lathkill Head. He asked me to thank members for the piece of ladder retrieved from the 210. Hopefully we can extract the remainder in the near future.

Can you please ring Ralph to confirm that you will be on the "Odin" practice. In addition to the "rescue" a surface training session will be held, probably on communications, unless someone has another topic they would like covered.

Having made a few inquiries it would appear that becoming a charity would have little benefit and is probably outweighed by the bureaucracy involved. This situation may change if we suddenly develop a large income (JRJ)

**For Sale;** In addition to our popular line in sweat shirts and rugby tops there is (for one month only ... never to be repeated) a collectors item ... CCPC Journals Volume 3 (1989) containing trips to the Vercours, Pyrenees, plus many other areas. Don't be disappointed, order today while stocks last!!!

#### Forthcoming Meets;

April 19	Rescue Practice Odin	April 27	Tatham Wife
May 3	Oxlow/ Maskhill	May 18	Marble Steps
May 24/27	OFD etc.		
June 8	Swinsto/Simpsons	June 21	Little Hull
June 28 or 29	Agen Allwedd		
July 5	Pipikin/Link	July 12	Club 40th
July 19>	Goufre Berger	July 19/20	Whitescar and Sell Gill
Aug 2	Lost Johns	Aug 17	Ogof Hespte Alyn
Aug 23	Penyghent	Sept. 6	Rumbling Hole
Sept. 14	Little Neath River Cave	Sept. 27	Providence/Das Cave
		Sept. 28	Cherry Tree Hole

I have been notified that the last ropes sent for testing are O.K. despite looking pretty naff due to glazing caused by members abbing down Rowten on it dry!!! There's got to be a lesson here somewhere.

**PEAK RIGGING GUIDES.** The latest batch of guides are now in circulation as is the laminated version. Profits from the latter are being donated to DCRO. Thanks must go to Steve, Tim and Paul H. for their assistance with these. Ralph.

Ralph has still not traced the "original" club log. Handwritten in 1957 by Mike Scott it has a mottled grey cover with red binding. Please search your book shelves.

Giants Hole now has changing facilities, but entry fees are up to £2.00. The condition in the windpipe seems a bit vague. Ralph and Paul have installed bolts on the traverse between the Eating House and Geology.

The new laminated rigging guides have now been sponsored by Hitch n Hike.

Thanks to Paul Nixon Nigel now has a fair amount of steel for the gate at Holme Bank Chirt Mine. If you come across any you think might be useful please contact Nigel. The gate is now well on it's way so keep your ears open ... assistance will probably be required in the near future.

Saturday, 2nd. December 1995 : Youd's Level, Matlock.  
(Caves Of The Peak District, Page 132. : - Main entrance N.G.R. 2955 5945.  
Length: 1.2 miles.)

John Preston and I set off to have a look at this because it is supposed to be the longest coffin level in Derbyshire (does that mean there are longer ones somewhere else ?), although I think we had mis-read the guide and expected it to be 12 miles long not 1.2 miles, or was it the other way round ? Anyway we hadn't done it so we went ! We were originally going to abseil in down one of the hill-top shafts, and then follow a downhill (downstream ?) route to exit by the river at Artist's Corner. However common sense prevailed and we decided to carry out our plan in reverse (not the abseil) just in case we couldn't find our way through from the top.

The day started well. You have to collect a key from The Peak District Mining Museum, but we were too early and it hadn't opened. Plan B - find a cafe. Later, back to Plan A and we collected the key (which turned out to be a length of steel rod with a handle at one end and a hook at the other) and parked near the toilets by the children's playground at Artist's Corner. "Funny," John said, "there seem to be a lot of people here getting changed." The other people thought we were strange because we didn't have long, pointed, brightly coloured roof-boxes on top of my trusty Escort. They were even more surprised when we scrambled down the river bank next to them and peered (PEERED I said) up a thirty centimetre diameter pipe (twelve inches for the less metricated among you) with water dribbling out of it. Yes, we had found Youd's Level, but no way in and no key-hole ! We were left alone as the roof-box owners drifted off down river splashing sadly with big plastic spoons, so we went to play on the swings. Oddly enough there was a keyhole in the ground, next to the slide, and beneath a metal cover we found a shaft dropping about three metres into a horizontal passage with flowing water. It was all a bit 'Alice down the rabbit hole' if you know what I mean.

We closed the lid behind us (Beware of falling toddlers !), and suddenly it seemed a bit more like a caving trip. The passage ran straight to the river bank and the exit pipe, and the other way (north) it led easily, with dry-stone walls and roof, into the hill-side. Sadly the water was foul and smelled of bad drains, and it wasn't long before we discovered the reason. As we passed beneath the houses the ginging in the roof was stained and fouled with waste water which must be escaping from a broken pipe above. At least it wasn't toilet waste, but even so it was unpleasant. Fortunately within a short distance the pollution was left behind.

Note: The level had been re-discovered in 1977 by Stuart Youds when he was digging in his garden (on the other side of the road from the present entrance) to make a new drain. Much exploration was done from an entrance shaft opened in the garden by Peak District Mines Historical Society, before the present entrance was opened.

The passage enlarged to a comfortable walking size and we passed several flooded stopes in the floor which were easy to avoid with the clear water as we went in but could give you a nasty surprise on the way out with the water cloudy (ankle deep suddenly becoming DEEP). Small side passages here connect to minor workings and shafts, all blocked. Beyond, the passage branched, straight on was blind, so we followed the water round into the left passage which forced us down onto hands and knees as we entered the coffin level. The passage is heavily silted here, no doubt from the long period when the exit was all but blocked, so you are actually crawling along in the top third of the passage that was available to the miners. After a short distance the passage kinks to the right with a shaft directly above the turn discharging enough water to give you a good soaking if you tried to climb up so we didn't bother. (Waterfall Shaft - 82 feet UP, leading to an upper series of workings and



We continued along the coffin level, and checked out a short level on the right to the bottom of Railway, or \*Haslam Shaft (230' from surface to level, but bottom 80' blocked so no way through), and several other side levels, but none of them went very far. The main coffin level was about 4' 6" high and less than 2' wide, so for most of the time we had to move in a kind of stooping walk with one shoulder twisted forward, but at least the water was only a couple of inches deep so that was no problem. Eventually we reached a 'Y' junction, the right branch going to Day, or \*Deep Shaft. The shaft is about 4' 6" by 2' 6" and is open to the surface, 269' above, where it has been covered with concrete sleepers. Below the level the shaft is filled with rubble, and is easy to pass to a further short passage leading to a 50' shaft to water. We went on along the left branch, following the coffin level for another 300' to its intersection with a pipe vein which had been mined out to form an irregular chamber. The coffin level was intended to act as a drainage level (sough), and at this point the miners had driven a by-pass passage to carry water from the upper part of the pipe, past the chamber and into the level, to avoid flooding the lower workings (now filled with rubble).

The whole character of the trip changed at this point as the route now followed the worked-out pipe through a series of chambers separated by flat-out crawls, partially blocked by silt and tailings from the crushing floors that had operated in many of the larger chambers. We were climbing steadily by this time and had lost all sign of the stream somewhere beneath the floor. There are a number of side passages, and workings, linked by small climbing shafts and ramps, and we found many signs of the 'Old Man' here, including some superb graffiti on the walls of one large chamber. This part is known as \*Old Jant Mine. Somewhere in this area we must have passed beneath Overseer, or \*Upper Close Shaft, which is about 200' deep and comes in through the roof of one of the chambers, but we missed it. Apparently it is covered with concrete sleepers at the top and has 2' 6" diameter air-ducting fitted in the top 16', but then it is 4' by 2' in solid rock for the rest of the shaft. We kept on up through the workings to a confusing area of old stopes close to the blocked \*Gentlewoman's Shaft, but we didn't locate it on this trip.

By now we were running out of time, as we were supposed to return the key to the museum before closing time, and we had spent ages taking photographs. Our return trip was uneventful, but slow, as by now John was carrying vast numbers of mineral samples, including some large chunks of orange calcite. Eventually we arrived back at the entrance shaft, and popped out into the children's playground like rabbits out of a hat, but sadly there was no one there to be impressed. We had better luck on the river bank, where I managed to amuse the returned paddlers by stepping into deep water and spilling a whole tub of unused, jumbo-size carbide into the river. The result was a bit like an underwater volcanic eruption, which just went on and on and turned the water downstream a sort of milky colour as I struggled to the bank. (Does carbide have any effect on trout? There seemed to be some tired ones coming up for a rest on the surface!)

All in all it was an excellent trip, much more interesting than we had expected, and especially good if you are interested in underground archaeology (or just mining remains). When the level and workings were being explored in the late seventies a party entered through Princess Shaft at the top of the hill and exited via Youd's Level, giving a descent of 700' (250 m.) and a distance of 1.25 miles (2 km). The trip only needed 100' (30 m.) of abseil rope and is possibly a British record. Unfortunately Princess Shaft and its workings have been quarried away so the trip can never be repeated! Even so, John and I still fancy a through trip from Overseer, or \*Upper Close Shaft if we can find out about access.

Note: Youd's Level should really be called by its historical names of Ringing Rake and Masson Sough. All shafts named in this account have their modern name given first, followed by their historical name, where known, marked \*.

Acknowledgement: I have used the excellent article from the Bulletin of The Peak District Mines Historical Society, Volume 8, No. 2, Pages 65 -102 (Autumn 1981) by Warriner, Willies and Flindall, which describes the re-opening of this complex of passages and shafts, and the fine surveys included in the article. The article contains a wealth of historical and geological information.

Colin S. Knox

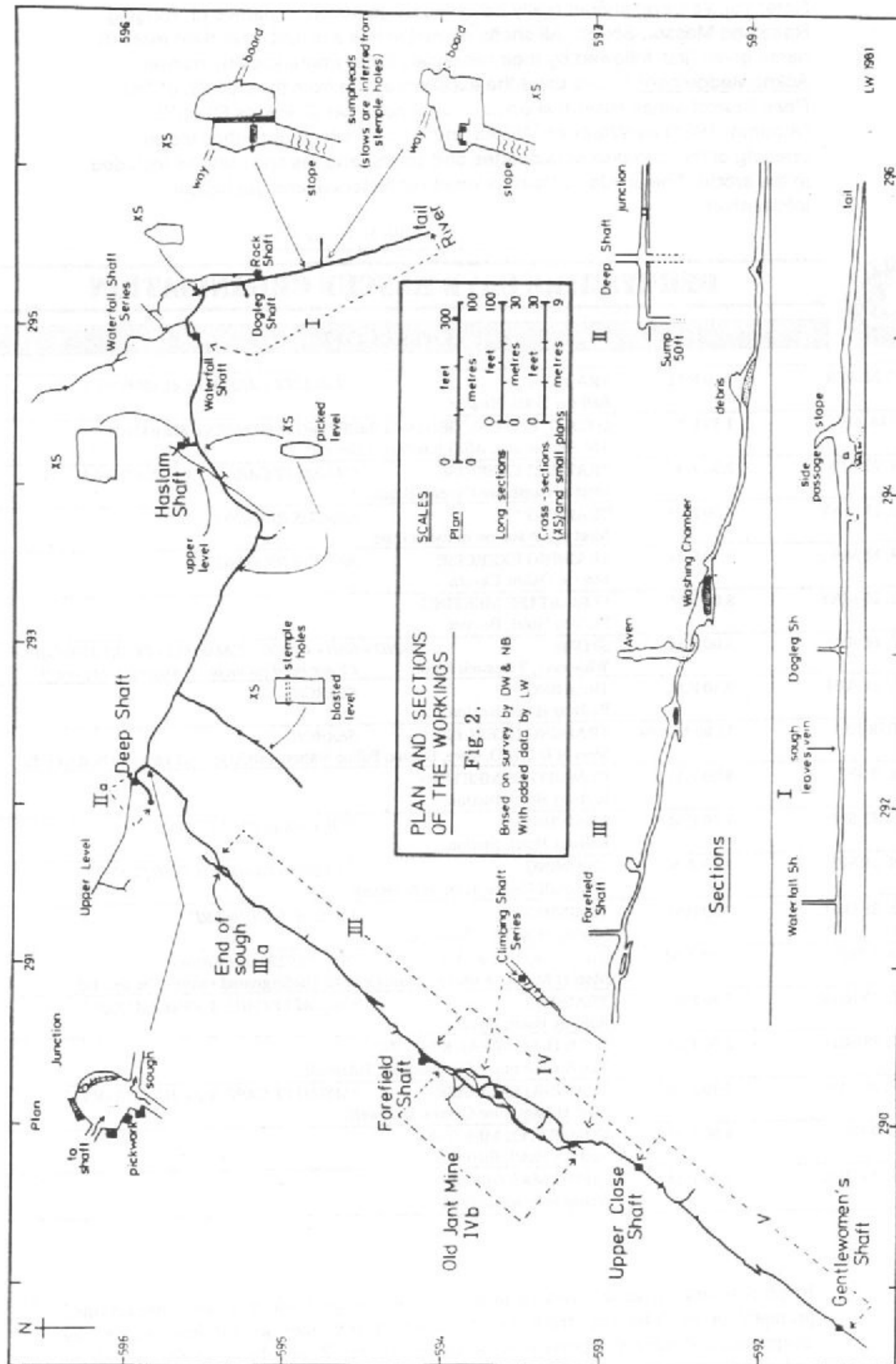


## DERBYSHIRE CAVE RESCUE ORGANISATION

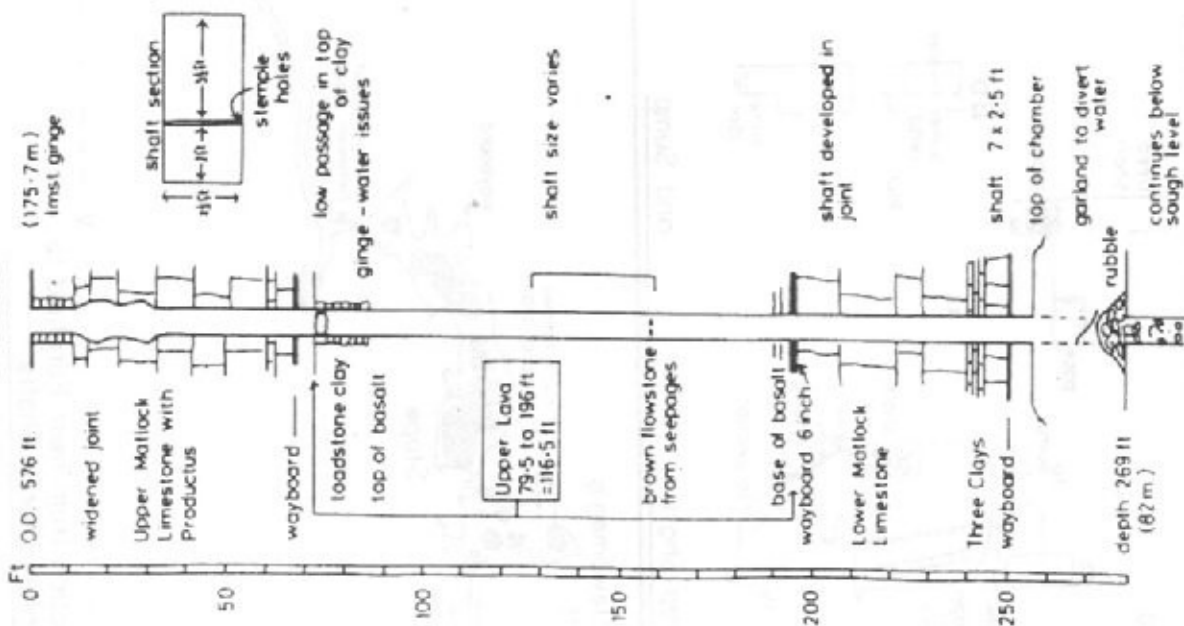
### EVENTS IN 1997

TUE. 22 APR.	7.30 P.M.	TRAINING Railway Hotel, Buxton.	CASUALTY CARE & EVACUATION 1.
SAT 26 APR.	2.30 P.M.	D.C.R.O. ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING & GENERAL MEETING The Anchor Inn, A623 junction, Tideswell.	
SUN. 27 APR.	9.30 A.M.	TRAINING EXERCISE Meet at Bagshawe Cavern, Bradwell.	CASUALTY CARE & EVACUATION 1.
TUE. 13 MAY.	7.30 P.M.	TRAINING Meet at sub station in Eyam Dale.	RESCUE RIGGING
SUN. 18 MAY.	9.30 P.M.	TRAINING EXERCISE Meet at Oxlow Cavern.	RESCUE RIGGING
TUE. 20 MAY.	8.00 P.M.	COMMITTEE MEETING Railway Hotel, Buxton.	
SAT. 14 JUN.	6.00 P.M.	STOMP Whiterake, Tideswell Moor.	BAND - BAR - DISCO - CAMPING - FOOD AVAILABLE £5 per head (to include camping if required)
TUE. 24 JUN.	7.30 P.M.	TRAINING Railway Hotel, Buxton.	SEARCH
SAT 28 JUN.	12.00 NOON	TRAINING EXERCISE Meet at D.C.R.O. store, Buxton Police Station. (underground venue to be decided)	SEARCH
TUE. 9 SEP.	8.00 P.M.	COMMITTEE MEETING Railway Hotel, Buxton.	
TUE. 23 SEP.	7.30 P.M.	TRAINING Railway Hotel, Buxton.	CONTROLLERS' EVENING
SUN. 28 SEP.	9.30 A.M.	TRAINING Whitehall Centre, Long Hill, Buxton.	GENERAL TRAINING "CIRCUS"
TUE. 28 OCT.	7.30 P.M.	TRAINING Mining Museum, Matlock Bath.	RESCUE ENGINEERING
SUN. 2 NOV.	9.30 A.M.	TRAINING EXERCISE Meet at Mining Museum, Matlock Bath. (underground venue to be decided)	RESCUE ENGINEERING
TUE. 25 NOV.	7.30 P.M.	TRAINING Railway Hotel, Buxton.	CASUALTY CARE & EVACUATION 2.
SAT. 29 NOV.	2.30 P.M.	D.C.R.O. GENERAL MEETING The Anchor Inn, A623 junction, Tideswell.	
SUN. 30 NOV.	9.30 A.M.	TRAINING EXERCISE Meet at Bagshawe Cavern, Bradwell.	CASUALTY CARE & EVACUATION 2.
TUE. 9 DEC.	8.00 P.M.	COMMITTEE MEETING Railway Hotel, Buxton.	
SAT. 13 DEC.	7.30 P.M.	CHRISTMAS DINNER Venue to be announced.	

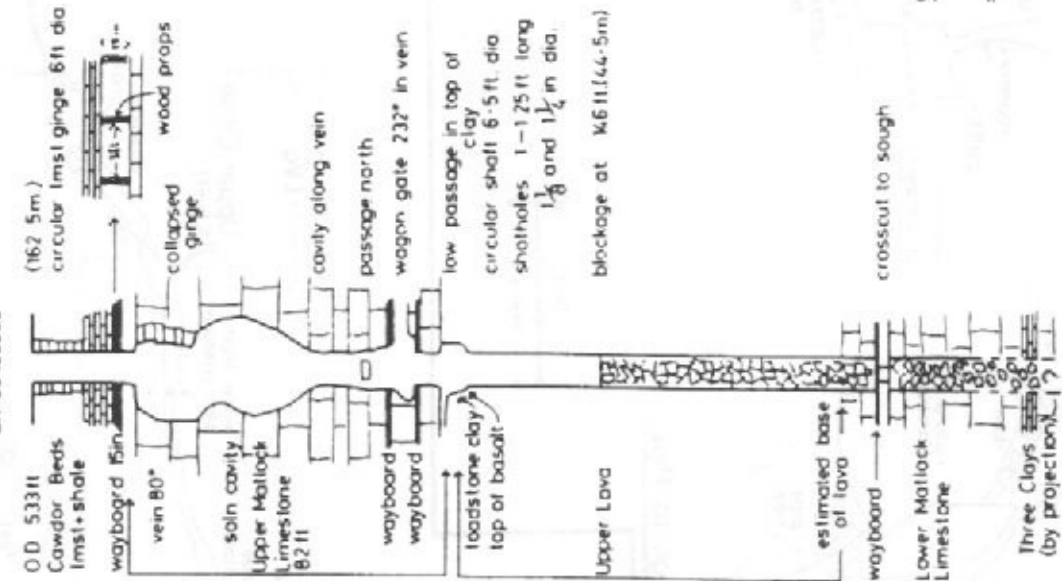
Ralph is having immense problems in keeping tabs on gear which is not being returned promptly or in dribs and drabs. On a couple of occasions groups have had to be disappointed or make alternative plans as a result of this. Ropes should be returned clean, coiled and with all knots undone. **Maillons should not be left in sacks with wet ropes.**



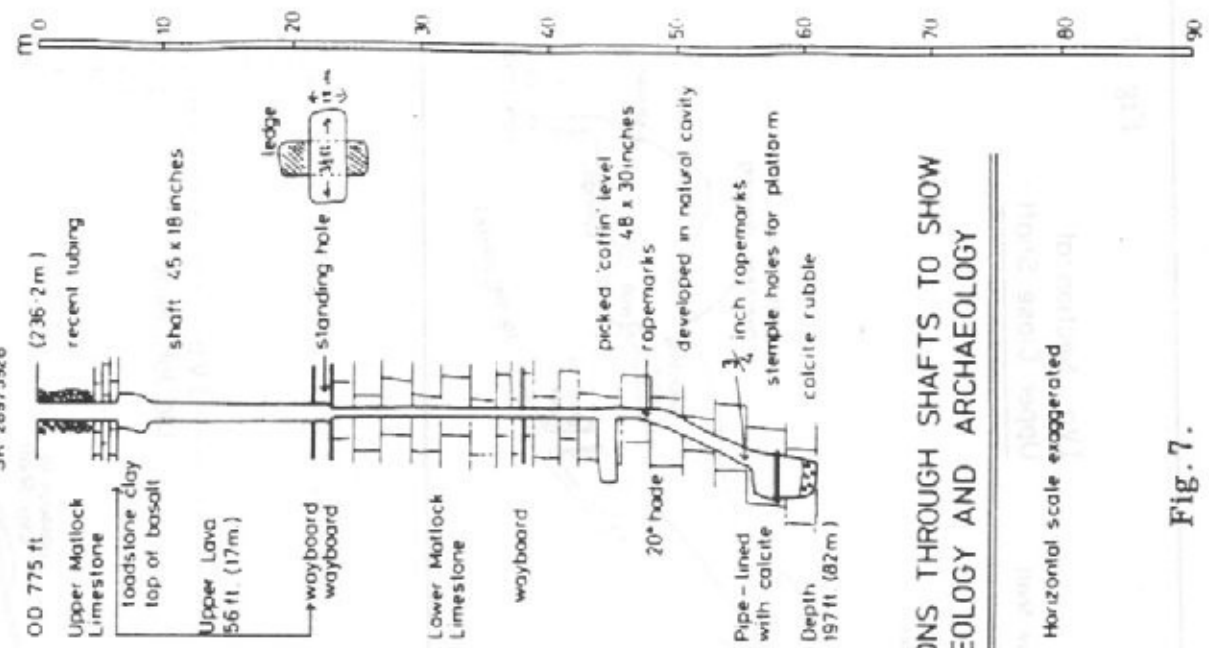
# Deep Shaft SK 292/5969



# Haslam Shaft SK 294/5956



# Upper Close Shaft SK 289/5928



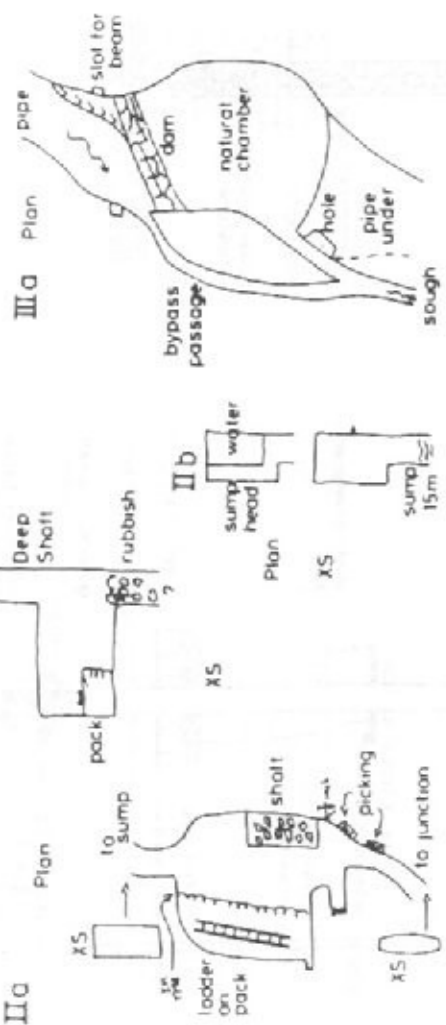
## SECTIONS THROUGH SHAFTS TO SHOW GEOLOGY AND ARCHAEOLOGY

Horizontal scale exaggerated

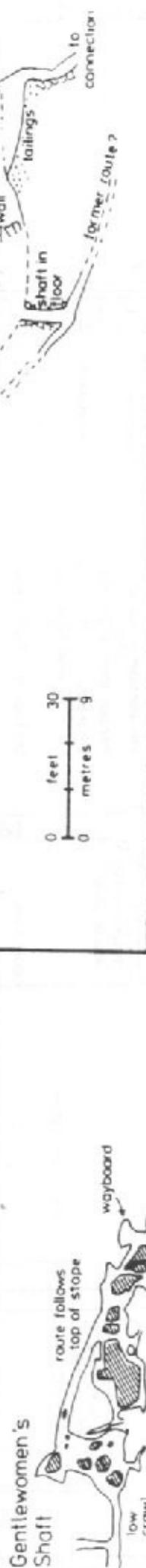
Fig. 7.

Fig. 3.

IVa Section at  
Upper Close Shaft



Deep Shaft and Sump



Section from near Forefield to  
Gentlewomen's Shafts

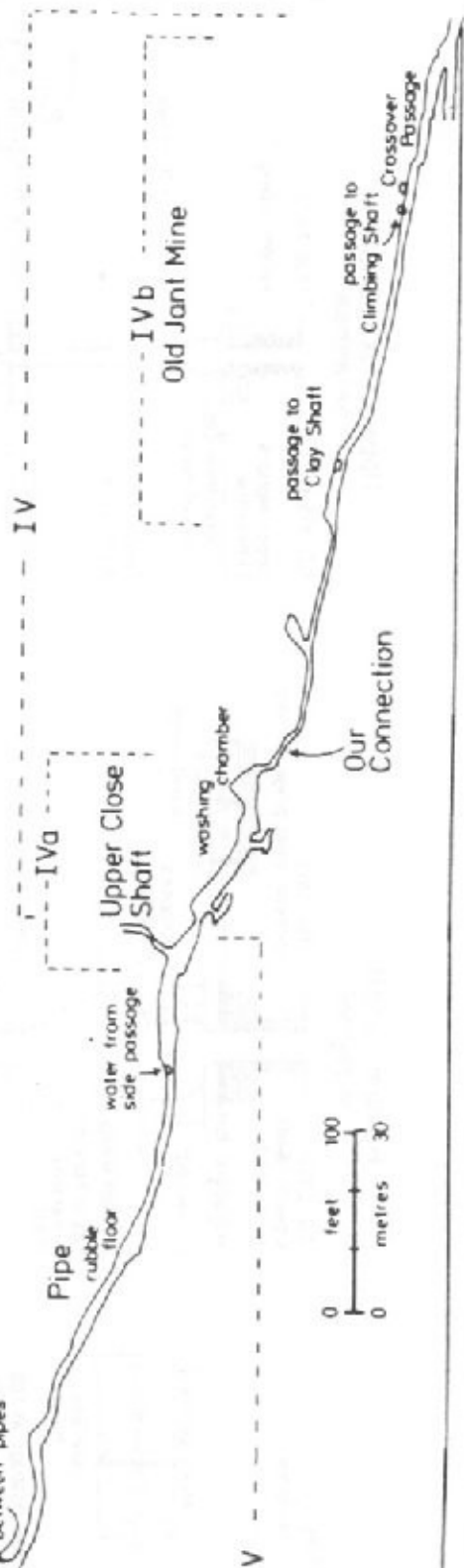




Fig. 4.

