

# C.C.P.C.

## Newsletter.

### July '97



No.54

Well, did you manage to pay your subs on time? **If you still haven't you are not insured.**

All the ladder has now been removed from the 210 thanks to Tim, Dan, Paul Nixon and Ralph. Ben has transported it to his "new" entrance to Lathkill Head. He sends his thanks and an invite to anyone wishing to have a look at this new entrance to Dreamtime.

A ladder was recently removed from P8 leaving an instructor and 3 novices marooned. Hopefully it wasn't stolen but it pays to be vigilant until the matter is cleared up.

CCPC were involved in a major incident when a ladder snapped in the "Far Flats" (is there a lesson to be learned about safety lines?) causing the occupant to fall about 5m breaking his upper arm in 2 places in addition to sustaining pelvic injuries. It took about 2 dozen underground DCRO members (9 from CCPC) about 10 hours to extract him (From the call out) Other CCPC members were involved in the surface arrangements. Despite being a technical nightmare the rescue went very smoothly. Thanks to all who turned out and apologies to those who weren't called .... No doubt your turn will come!!!

A fatal accident recently occurred due to a screw gate crab being opened by a fig.8 being used by a climber. Small maillons can do the same to a Stop. **Be warned.**

A number of rigging/self rescue courses are being organised at a cost of £25. If you are interested contact Ralph.

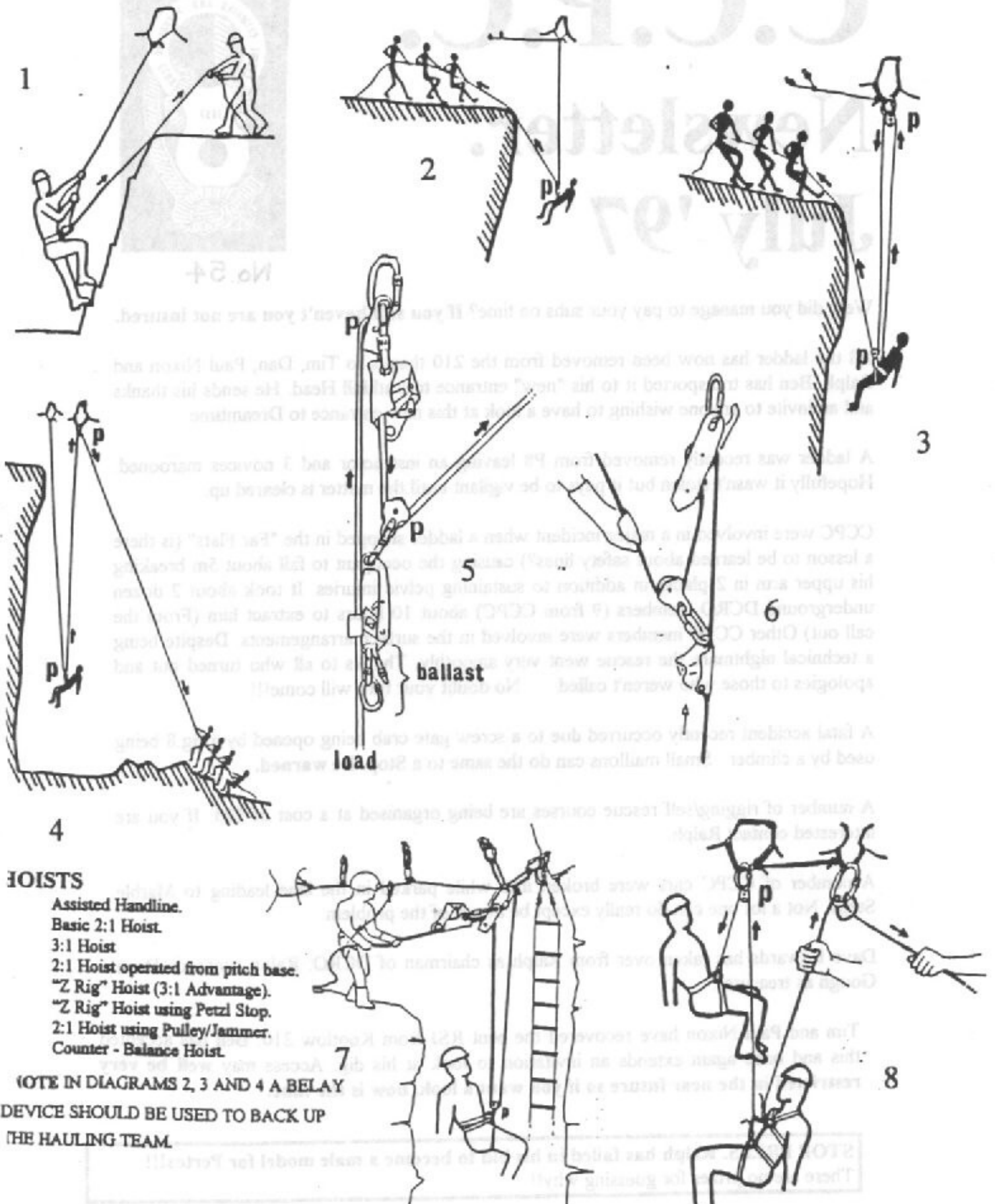
A number of CCPC cars were broken into while parked in the lane leading to Marble Steps. Not a lot one can do really except be aware of the problem.

Dave Edwards has taken over from Ralph as chairman of DCRO. Ralph succeeds Dave Gough as treasurer.

Tim and Paul Nixon have recovered the bent RSJ from Knotlow 210. Ben has accepted this and once again extends an invitation to look at his dig. Access may **well be very restricted in the near future so if you want a look, now is the time.**

**STOP PRESS. Ralph has failed in his bid to become a male model for Pertex!!!**  
There are no prizes for guessing why!!

The diagrams below give details of a number of hauling systems useful with small groups. However ... they do need practice!! Don't wait until you need them "in anger"



**IMPORTANT : THE LEADER SHOULD ALWAYS BE ABLE TO REVERSE HAULING SYSTEMS AND LOWER OFF OTHERS FROM THE CLIMB**

## Peak Cavern: 15th. December 1996.

Once again it was our annual tourist trip round Peak Cavern, and this time John Preston and I had managed to take Paul Nixon with us to give us a good excuse for doing the tour rather than anything strenuous. We met the others as usual in the T.S.G. ex-chapel, filled in all the paperwork and paid up £1 per person, then we wandered off for a coffee until the official unlocking of the gate at 11.00 a.m.. First-timers always seem a little surprised at having to carry everything up into the cave, and then getting changed inside, but when you see how packed with visitors Castleton becomes by the afternoon, I suppose its understandable that they don't want a group of filthy cavers wandering through the middle of the village before peeling off on the car park !

There is something sad about the entrance to Peak. The cave faces north, at the end of a short, steep sided gorge, and in December the skeletal trees, decaying vegetation, and low winter light are depressing enough without the hideous mess of interwoven fencing panels, iron railings and barbed wire which greet you at the end of the approach path. Passing the outer gate you then walk between a garden-shed pay hut and the cave wall to emerge on the topmost terrace of a number of huge man-made terraces inside the entrance chamber, previously used for rope making. The remains of that ancient industry, rope stretching frames, winding frames and devices for twisting the strands together, stand abandoned and decaying in small areas where they have been gathered together and left. A muddle of white plastic garden furniture, a discarded freight pallette and other assorted clutter hardly improves the first impression of dereliction and neglect. Isn't this supposed to be spectacular, awe-inspiring and so on ? Earlier, while at the T.S.G. base, we had learned that the couple who lease Peak Cavern are retiring, so the Duchy of Lancaster are putting the lease up for sale. Whoever takes it on will certainly have plenty of scope for improvement.

Once changed we set off with our kit through the inner gate and along Lumbago Walk to the Great Cave, where we stashed our clothes up among the boulders. The tourist path continues a little further, through Roger Rains House to the top of the Devil's Staircase, where the visitors are stopped by a barrier. As a youngster I visited the cave on a number of occasions, and in those days (early sixties) tourists were taken much further, down the steps to the Peak Cavern stream where it flows off into a small passage leading to the Halfway House sump. The visitors, of course, kept to the main route upstream, following a well made path which criss-crossed the stream through the Five Arches, until it reached a 'T' junction where the Buxton and Speedwell Water passages combined. At this point the show-cave ended. It's easy to see why the present day tourist path has been cut short. Beyond the barrier every surface is coated with a thick layer of soft mud, making the paths, steps and bridges treacherous, and a major undertaking to clear up, although some efforts have obviously been made in the past. Additional mud must be deposited every time the cave floods. As I understand it, in flood conditions the Halfway House sump cannot take the extra volume of water and backs up, causing all the passages upstream for quite some distance to fill, and the water rises up the Devil's Staircase, until, in extreme conditions it has been known to flow out through the inner gate and across the entrance chamber to daylight. It's not surprising that with these kind of problems the cave is closed to tourists for up to six months every year.



Anyone taking on the lease would need to solve the flood problem before making any major investment in new paths, steps or lighting. How about a flood relief tunnel direct from the streamway at the foot of the Devil's Staircase to discharge into the existing channel in the entrance chamber or into the gorge ? I'm not too sure about the levels, but the distance only looks to be about 250 metres on the survey. If you think that sounds unlikely, look at the tunnel driven in White Scar Cave to link the Battlefield with the existing tourist route. (They also managed to get rid of their old paths etc., and replaced them with excellent metal-grid surfaces and steps.) There seems to be plenty of potential for someone with imagination and cash ! It does seem sad that such a stunning natural feature, in the heart of a honey-pot village in the Peak National Park should be in such a state.

We wandered off on our tour, through the Mucky Ducks and into the Upper Gallery, which led us easily to Surprise View where we climbed down the fixed ladder into the Peak Cavern Streamway. We went downstream to the Buxton Water Sump and back, then upstream to Squaw's Junction where we left our spare kit. We ignored the route up the waterfall and went on upstream for a short distance to a passage off on a shelf to the left. This led through to a junction with Lake Passage where we turned left to Lake Sump. Paul was persuaded to do the decent thing and swim through, pulling on the guide rope, and seemed grateful to be hauled out as he appeared face-up on the far side. After a quick dip in Ink Sump we turned back and this time Paul followed me through more easily face-down. John used the dry by-pass, but we promised not to mention that to anyone. We rejoined the main route and moved quickly on upstream to generate some warmth, visiting the Picnic Dig emergency food dump on the way, before being finally stopped by Far Sump. Our plans to crawl up every possible dig were abandoned, and we set off back the way we had come. Just beyond the Maypole Inlet ladder we climbed a fixed rope on the left and entered a tube, well lubricated with liquid mud, which led, following a plastic pipe, to the Main Stream Inlet with its mess of plumbing fixtures sticking out of the wall. We were able to get partially cleaned off in the numerous jets of water squirting out of the pipes, then we turned right, following the water down the Squaw's Junction waterfall to our bags. Ruth was there alone, waiting for the rest of her group who had gone off to Lake Passage, but she claimed to be warm enough, and didn't want to get into a bivi bag with anyone ! After hot drinks we left Ruth and climbed back up the waterfall, then followed the route to the right, via Wigwam Aven and Galena Chamber, which eventually re-joins the main route close to the top of the Surprise View ladder. We had to wait in the side passage as a large party were on their way in and had bottle-necked at the ladder, but that gave Paul a chance to get his own back on me. Fortunately the tackle sack full of rock samples only had 10 feet to fall before knocking me flat, so I only suffered multiple injuries. I even ended up carrying it later ! We ended our tour with a good look round the Treasury area, picking up a few more mineral bits and visiting the sump itself, before strolling on out to the Great Cave to collect our belongings.

Arriving back in daylight by the gate we found the others had left the cave only minutes before so we were the last of the twelve Crewe members in the cave. By the time we were changed it was about 3.30pm., and the light was already beginning to fade into dusk. Another good trip completed.

Colin S. Knox      20.12.1996

# Crewe Climbing and Pot-holing Club : Membership List - June 1997

Life members, and members recorded as having paid their 1997 membership subscription by the end of the meeting held on the 2nd. June 1997 at the 'Bleeding Wolf', Scholar Green. ( \* = associate member).

SURNAME	First	Address	Town	Post Code	Home Phone	Work Phone	Mobile Phone
BRANDWOOD	Sharon						
BRATT	Melvyn						
BROOKES	Jane						
CAMPBELL	Dan						
CAMPBELL	Tim						
CONDE	Darren						
CONDE	Neil						
CONDE	Tracey						
COOPER	Nigel						
CRANE	George						
EDMONDS	Brian						
EVANS	Ross						
*EVENDEN	Duncan						
FAULKNER	Keith						
FOSTER	Mick						
GAMBLE	Paul						
GAMBLE	Tony						
GRINDEY	Ian						
HANDLEY	Emma						
HIGGINSON	Max						
HOLDCROFT	Paul						
JOHNSON	Marguerite						
JOHNSON	Ralph						
*JOSE	Andy						
KNOX	Steve						
LEAR	Gordon						
LOVATT	Mark						
MARTIN	John						

Details Redacted

*MARTIN	Rick
MOBLEY	Nigel
MORRIS	Colin
MOUNTFORD	Kevin
NIXON	Paul
PARKINSON	Lionel
PRESTON	John
RABINOWITZ	Gideon
RABINOWITZ	Ruth
SHENTON	John
SMITH	John
SMITH	Terry
STEADMAN	Pete
*TEMPLEMAN	Andrew
WALKER	Alan

Total: 43 members.

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The following were listed as 'paid-up' members in 1996, but had not paid their 1997 subscription by the April meeting, so are no longer members under the terms of the arrangements for insurance purposes. If your name appears below please consider re-joining The Club !!

BANKS	J.T.
HANSON-ABBOTT	Adrian
LEESE	M
LISTER	D
READE	Pip
REYNOLDS	Tony

## Details Redacted

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If your details are not correct or are incomplete, please let Steve Knox know as soon as possible. Membership subscriptions for 1997: Full Membership £16.00, Associate Membership £8.00.

# Police tribute to cave rescue team

Cave rescuers battled for more than ten hours to bring an injured potholer to safety after he had been hurt 200 feet underground.

Friends raised the alarm on Sunday evening after lecturer Lawrence Blanchard chipped his pelvis and broke his arm down Nettle Shaft Pot near Sparrowpit.

More than 20 rescuers were involved in the operation to bring the injured man to the surface.

Inspector David Barlow of Derbyshire police said: "It was an extremely long, difficult and protracted rescue because of the number of very winding and narrow passages. He could not have been in a much worse position."

Mr Blanchard, 33, from Nottingham, was injured when he fell ten feet to the ground after a ladder broke.

The emergency services were called at 7pm, but it was nearly 5.30am before he was taken to hospital in Stockport for treatment.

Inspector Barlow added: "People visiting Derbyshire are very fortunate to have such dedicated and talented rescue people available. I cannot praise the cave rescue team too highly."

## DCRO TRAINING SESSIONS

9 Sept.	8.00pm	Railway hotel	Committee
23 Sept	7.30pm	Railway Hotel	Controllers
28 Sept	9.30am	Whitehall	Training Circus
2 Nov	7.30pm	Matlock	Engineering
25 Nov	7.30pm	Railway Hotel	Cas.care+evac.
29 Nov	2.30pm	Anchor Inn	DCRO AGM
30 Nov	9.30am	Bagshaw	Cas.care+evac.
9 Dec	8.00pm	Railway Hotel	Committee
13 Dec	7.30pm	???????	Xmas dinner.

## C.C.P.C. MEETS, July - November (inc.) 1997:

5 July 1997	Pipikin/Link
12 July	Club 40th. Anniversary 'Do'.
19 July	Whitescar
20 July	Sell Gill
19-30 July	Gouffre Berger
2 August	Lost Johns
17 August	Ogof Hespte Alyn
23 August	Penyghent Pot
6 September	Rumbling Hole
14 September	Little Neath River Cave
27 September	Providence Pot / Dow Cave
28 September	Cherry Tree Hole
4 October	Lancaster Hole
19 October	Slaughter Stream
25 October	Gaping Gill / Stream Passage Pot
1 November	Notts Pot
16 November	Giant's Hole
30 November	Craig a Ffynnon



Sir,

The mineral districts of this county have long complained of the depreciation of British lead ore, in consequence of the admission of foreign ore and lead without a sufficient protecting duty.

They have accordingly petitioned parliament for relief; and there is no reason to doubt that their petition will meet with the attention which their importance demands.

As there is at present so much to complain of in the badness of the times, the miners would certainly act wisely in retrenching some unnecessary expences which unfortunately adhere to their trade: and I have reason to believe, that many of them are disposed to do so, but it too often happens that these good inclinations are over-ruled by those who ought rather to encourage them.

Instead of paying the men at the reckoning house on the mine, as might be done, they are paid at different alehouses in the neighbourhood, where there is always drink, and often dinner, and the same unnecessary expences are frequently incurred at making a bargain.

There are also, in some places, occasional dinners at which the miners are in the habit of attending through fear of giving offence.

All these are expences which it is cruel to lead the poor miners into, when in almost every instance they might be avoided.

There is another evil, which pervades almost all great trades to a certain extent, and mining amongst the rest, I mean the implied obligation upon workmen, to purchase goods of their employer or his friend, and even to accept goods in lieu of wages.

This practice is contrary to express statute, and is punishable by heavy penalties, but it is extremely difficult to bring home the offence.

To this unjust mode of dealing with poor workmen, there are, I admit, many honourable exceptions; several proprietors of mines set their faces against it, and see that the men are not supplied with goods, but are paid in money.

I have little, or no doubt that were all great proprietors to look but for once into details of their concerns, strict justice would be done between parties; and that this, as well as many of the other evil practices above hinted at, would be abolished.

Let me hope, that at all events, the miners will not be wanting to themselves, but will, as far as depends upon their own endeavours, instantly relinquish all habits which are injurious to the interest of their families; and to this, let me add another hope, that the proprietors will ultimately (if not immediately) see it to be a duty to protect the industrious miner from every thing that tends to depress him.

I am, your obt. humble servt.

Miners Friend.

June 9, 1828.