

# CCPC



## Newsletter No.22

November 1989

### WARNING (1) GRAVEL POT

The bottom of the walled shaft in GRAVEL POT (Lack Fell) is in an "EXTREMELY UNSTABLE CONDITION" and the Council of Northern Caving Clubs have issued a memorandum advising people to keep well away until work has been done to remedy this condition. Future access will depend upon how much work is involved in stabilising the boulders.

### PEAK CAVERN: CONSERVATION GUIDELINES

This Site of Special Scientific Interest is showing definite signs of wear, partly due to the high number of muddy cavers tramping through it and partly due to an endless amount of digs. The keyholders and other interested parties recently drafted a new set of rules (some cynics in the TSG have been heard whispering 'politics'). The ones which directly affect us, translated into English, are:

1) Carbide can no longer be used, not even as a spare light.

2) The booking system is being tightened up and it will no longer be possible to just turn up and tag onto the back of another party.

3) No smoking is permitted beyond the Vestibule.

4) There is no access to passage beyond the Wind Tunnel.

Compliance with these rules will hopefully curtail the introduction of more severe restrictions.

### WARNING (2) MANDALE SOUGH

BAD AIR has been reported in Mandale Sough, Lathkill Dale. Although not tested, it is thought to be a build up of methane from rotting timbers. The sough is bone dry at the moment and the gas may be dispersed when normal (wet) conditions return. In the meantime, be careful with those carbide lamps!

### CONGRATULATIONS!

- To DELYTH and LIAM on the birth  
- of their second SON, HUW on  
- 20th August 1989.  
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About two dozen members of CCPC had a thoroughly enjoyable weekend at SHUGBOROUGH HALL. Activities included canoeing, archery, swimming, climbing, excessive drinking and fire-walking. A barbeque was rounded off with a showing of the long awaited video. MANY THANKS TO GEOFF. AND HIS COLLEAGUES (LORD LITCHFIELD?) FOR MAKING THIS EVENT POSSIBLE.

Due to unusual weather conditions, it is now sometimes possible to crawl right through the downstream sumps in P8 and see passages which I doubt that even the divers have seen clearly before. I have been asked by the TSG to remind people who go for a look not to use the divers lines as a climbing aid as damage to these could be potentially fatal when it is again used as a diving aid.

STYLE CLOSE MINE  
(Eyam, Saturday, 12th August 1989)

Following our pursuit of holes which do not appear in the 'Caves of Derbyshire', Gill and I went to look at a few prospective mines which Chris and I had found on a few walks in previous weeks. The first one was a winding shaft near Winster (258 597) which has been capped and closed off with two twist nuts. I took the mole grips and struggled for ten minutes without making any impression on them. We resolved to return with the WD40 and headed for the next target.

This was an adit in Via Gelia (276 573), just North of Ball-eye Mine. We wandered in as far as daylight penetrated. This looked really promising. Somewhere ahead, huge volumes of water could be heard cascading down a vast waterfall; we could also hear voices!

Back at the car, we changed into full gear, carbide lamp, the works; this could be a long trip! After stumbling thirty yards over old tyres and wading through icy water we came to a blank wall. The 'huge volumes of water' was a small stream issuing from a slit about three feet above the ground and falling into a pool. As for the voices, well?

Not to be put off so easily, Gill remembered another hole she had noticed about 150 yards down the valley, so off we went. This one looked like a culvert to drain the road and had a very awkward entrance. Gill agreed to follow if I was not back in a few minutes. After a short crawl I could see daylight. What was this, a gated entrance? I pushed up the gate and discovered that it was a grid. The two quarrymen stood having a fag next to it looked even more surprised than I did as I apologised and quickly retreated.

So far, nothing to write home about. A couple of weeks earlier Chris and I had found what looked like a large shaft on the footpath between Eyam and Stoney Middleton via the boundary stone. This had been capped but all that would be needed to remove the door was a set of mole-grips. This could be the big one!

We drove off to Eyam via Bakewell where we stopped to take money from the cash dispenser. I know now how a Martian must feel from the looks I got walking round in a furry suit and trainers!

We parked in a lane which leads almost directly to the mine and took enough gear to cover all possibilities. The trap door to the shaft was very easy to open. We had expected a bar to be set into the capping to give a sound belay but there was absolutely nothing. This was the one possibility which we had overlooked. We ferreted about in a ruined building until we found a suitable piece of 12" x 4" and used a rusting old abandoned tractor as a back-up belay. The shaft was probably a winding shaft (diameter 8' x 6') and had good sound ginging for the first 40 feet. There was no need to rebelay as the shaft was quite vertical and besides, there was nothing to rebelay to.

At about -200 ft I saw the first sign of civilization, a new but rather badly placed spit. I shouted up to Gill to bring my tackle bag with the intention of rebelaying on the way up to make the ascent quicker and carried on down. At around -300 ft I was getting a little concerned; I still couldn't see the bottom and was rapidly running out of rope; I had tied a knot in the bottom this time, hadn't I?

I stopped on a pile of deads stacked in a side passage and dropped one down the remainder of the shaft. With great relief I realised that there was only about another 30 ft and the bottom was dry. I landed on a pile of assorted junk which smelled very badly of dead sheep. I shouted up and Gill followed.

There did appear to be a way on at the bottom but it was full of assorted scrap, barbed wire, a car door and railway tracks. I had two goes at passing this whilst awaiting Gill but shredded the left leg of my (new) oversuit and so called it off. When Gill appeared I invited her to have a go. She replied 'I would prefer not to, thank you' (only in rather more colourful language) and so we set off out.

The stretch on the rope made me bounce a good six feet with every step which made prussiking quite slow. When I reached the spit I thought 'why should I suffer alone?' and so ignored it. I also apparently dislodged a rock which quite frightened Gill as there was nowhere to go to avoid falling debris. Climbing out was difficult as there was buggar all to stand on. Gill's etrier again saved the day.

Whilst sat at the top awaiting Gills ascent (which was slowed down due to lamp failure) I got into conversation with a farmer and his mates. When they had calmed down they told me that I should have asked permission from Mr Nash / Mr John Beck, Glebe Cottage and that the spit had been put in place by the CRO during the recent activities

in the area. The shaft was 't' do wit' drainage" and connected up with Glebe mine at the other side of Eyam. Nobody knew its name and it was supposed to be locked.

When Gill appeared she told me that she had been quite relieved to hear voices in the mine as she didn't feel quite so alone (are we cracking up?). One of the farmers mates had done some enquiring and found that the name was Style Close Mine.

If anyone has read this far and is still interested, the shaft is found at 224 759. Permission should be sought and the mine may be locked. At present it can be opened with two large adjustable spanners. It is something between 300 and 350 ft deep and has a lot of side passages leading off throughout it's depth. Water can be heard at the bottom which should be passable with a little clearing out. It is rumoured to connect up with a big mine. Take a scaffolding pole to belay to and a couple of bolts on the way down may make the return more pleasant. A short ladder or etrier is also useful. The location is handy for the Three Stags Heads.

Anyone know of any similar holes?

Mark L

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## CAPTION COMPETITION NO 2

### RESULTS

It would seem that George is no longer limiting himself to 50 % of the population and has now started on the male members of the club. A lot of people sympathised with poor Melv but after all the camera can't lie!

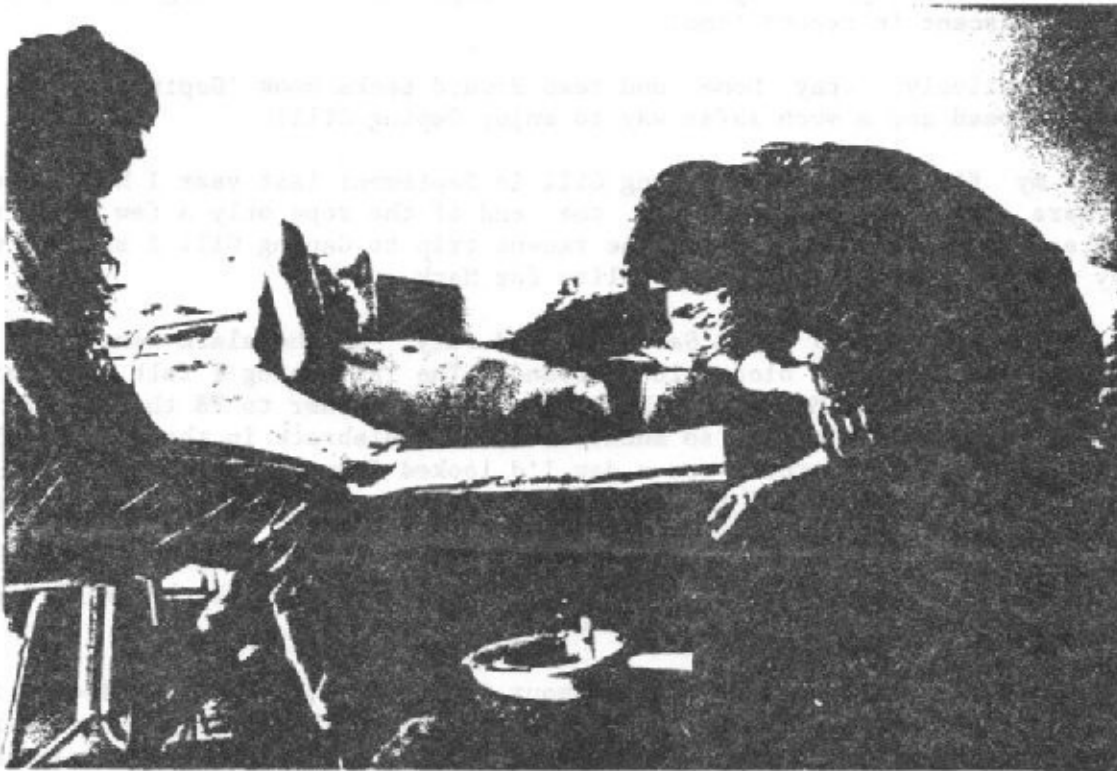
Melv "And I thought that sitting in the snow caused chaps on the bottom."

George (thinks) "I'll have to start putting notches on the other side of the bed post."

Any further contribution gratefully received.



CAPTION COMPETITION No 4



Study the photo and use your skill/experience to fill in the caption to indicate what Jane / Iain / Kevin / the bed-pan was saying/thinking.

Best entries to be included in a forthcoming newsletter.

CAPTION COMPETITION No 4.

Jane/Iain/Kevin/bed-pan "....."

Alcoholic's Anonymous ☐

Please give/post entries to Mark Lovatt

Redacted



## GAPING GILL REVISITED

Before contemplating a trip to Gaping Gill, consider the following points:

- 1) Choose a very cool day - it makes the 2½ mile uphill walk more comfortable.
- 2) If you have to go on a warm day, try and persuade someone else to carry your gear.
- 3) Whatever the weather, try and persuade someone else to carry your gear anyway!
- 4) If you must abseil the Main Shaft, make sure that you have knots in the end of the ropes so that when you descend the wrong rope you don't realise 320 ft off the ground that you only have 10 ft of rope left and nothing to stop you from making a descent in record time!
- 5) Alternatively, stay home and read Howard Becks book 'Gaping Gill'. Its an excellent read and a much safer way to enjoy Gaping Gill!

Before my first trip to Gaping Gill in September last year I had a recurring nightmare where I abseiled off the end of the rope only a few feet from the surface of Main Shaft. During the recent trip to Gaping Gill I sat and watched as my nightmare almost became a reality for Mark.

Our day began around 7 am on Saturday 22nd July. As the alarm went off I opened my eyes and took a bleary look around. The last thing I felt like doing was crawling out of bed. Mark and I had taken a first timer to P8 the evening before and he'd enjoyed himself so much, we had to celebrate in the pub and plan the next trip! However as today was a day I'd looked forward to for so long I had to get up, give Mark a call to make sure he was up and then get organised for our trip to Gaping Gill.

It took us a little while to get organised but after a couple of false starts we finally got going.

I was excited but tried not to think about Gaping Gill, I mean I'd looked forward to the trip last year and looked what happened then! During the journey to Clapham we discussed everything except Gaping Gill and definitely the most important topic (after the heavy night we'd had) for 1½ hours of the 2 hour journey was where the hell we could get a cup of coffee from!

We still hadn't found one by the time we reached Clapham Car Park and met up with Caddy, Neil and Darren, so we persuaded them that the first thing that we should do was find coffee and breakfast. We ended up in the 'Little Chef' near Clapham, there didn't seem to be anywhere else open. Despite the fact that the streets of Clapham were filled to capacity with people attending a street market, they hadn't bothered to open any cafes.

By the time we were ready to begin the 2½ mile walk, the temperature had hotted up considerably and not one of us was looking forward to carrying everything we required. However, where there's a will, there's a way! With the aid of ice lollies from the shop at Ingleborough Cave and telling each other silly jokes, we passed the time and eventually arrived at Gaping Gill Main Shaft.

We were pleased to find that we had got Main Shaft to ourselves and that the Beck didn't need damming - a good job as we'd left the necessary to do this in Mark's car and nobody was volunteering to go back for it!

Mark put on his gear and went to rig the traverse around the top of the Main Shaft. I sat watching in the extremely hot sun, delaying putting on my gear for as long as possible. As Mark began his descent I kitted up and went to wait for his 'rope free' signal. When the signal came I began my descent with shaking hands - what the hell was I doing this for? At the first bolt change, about 30 ft down I found Mark sat on a ledge (described in the rigging guide as 'short but extremely exposed' - they're not joking!!) having difficulty reaching for the last bolt in the traverse. With the aid of my etrier and a hefty push from me in the right direction, he successfully attached the rope to the last bolt.

So this was it - a free hang of approximately 330 ft - wonderful. The nerves turned to excitement and anticipation. Mark attached his rack and set off. Moments later it was apparent that something was very wrong. That's when I began to relive my nightmare.

Suspended on the narrow ledge 30 ft down from the vast opening of Gaping Gill Main Chamber I watched in horror as I heard Mark shout 'I'm on the wrong rope and there's no knot in the end'. I don't remember what went through my mind, but I can imagine what went through Marks! I'd coiled the short rope and put it out of the way so that there could be no mistaking which was the correct rope, I just couldn't believe what I was seeing and hearing! However, the story has a happy ending.

Mark, who always taught me to wear all my SRT gear practices what he preaches. Having had the good fortune to look down 10 ft before he ran out of rope he worked fast to attach his ascenders to stop him from slipping any further, attached his rack to the correct rope and carried on down.

As soon as Mark was off the shorter rope, I hauled it up, tied a knot in it and once again secured it out of the way - this time making sure that it would stay where it was put so that the mistake could not happen again.

When the 'rope free' call came I attached my rack with shaking hands but found it hard to launch myself off that tiny ledge. I couldn't get out of my mind the horrors of what might have happened if Mark hadn't been lucky enough to look down when he did. However, I took a deep breath, felt the adrenalin surging and, shouting "Whoopee", pushed myself off the ledge. My descent was very slow and didn't pick up much when I undid the bottom bar of my rack. The rope went straight through the waterfall. It was then that I wished that I was about three stones heavier or had the guts to undo yet another bar on my rack.

Eventually I reached the bottom drenched from head to foot (what a way to cool down after a long, hot walk on a scorching day). It was like a form of torture descending through a cold waterfall at the speed that I was going.

At the bottom I met a very elated Mark - the celebration of being alive had begun! The only problems we encountered after that were very minor in comparison - like both thinking that we would enjoy a cigarette whilst waiting for Cuddy etc. to join us and finding that the cigarettes had been reduced to soggy tobacco in my pocket by the waterfall!

At the bottom were Kev, Phil and A N Other who had originally planned to climb out through Main Shaft having come in through Stream Passage. Mark had told them what had happened and explained his rigging to them. The reason Mark ended up on the short rope was due to confusing the two ropes whilst tying off the traverse line. Although they considered the rigging to be safe enough, the volume of water persuaded them to retrace their steps and come back out through Stream Passage, leaving us to follow and derig. They then derrigged Main Shaft from the top.

Our journey to Stream Passage was quite straight forward, the only problems we encountered on route being cramp which Mark kept getting in his hands and me falling onto a rock chest

first and winding myself for a few minutes.

By the time we reached the top of the first pitch in Stream Passage, everyone was beginning to feel tired and couldn't wait to be out in the open again, heading for the pub. I nearly broke another 'Golden Rule' here by trying to persuade Mark I could climb the 15 ft ladder without a lifeline. After some argument, Mark persuaded me to let him go first then lifeline me. Once I started to climb I was grateful. I hadn't realised 'till then just how tired I was and having not had much experience on ladders, I found the climb quite hard work. Getting off at the top of this ladder is always a pig, there is very little to stand on and the way on is very tight. With Mark there lifelining me, space was very congested. The squeeze that leads to the bottom of the oil drums and the final climb, I found exhausting. I couldn't work out how Mark got through (again) and yet I struggled (again) - I put it down to being very tired. I summoned all my will-power and using brute force and ignorance, finally made it through. The smell of fresh air and the glimpse of daylight was an enticement which gave me enough energy to climb the oil drum with little effort. Climbing it was no problem, climbing out at the top was a different matter. I'd got stuck there before and had to be pulled out, this time I was determined to get myself out. Trouble was by this time I had little strength left and Kev and Co. were back at the top of Stream Passage threatening to pee on me! After watching me struggle for a bit they finally took pity on me, grabbed my arms and hauled me out! Now all we had to do was get to the pub and drink to a great trip, being safe and most of all, being alive!

Mark was elated. He'd survived a frightening experience and I was on a high having achieved an ambition I'd had for a long time and laid to rest a nightmare. Next time we go to Gaping Gill I'd like to go in through Stream Passage to see it at the beginning of a trip instead of through exhausted eyes at the end - so when are we going again? Gill.

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\* WELL 'ARD SWIMMING CLUB \*  
\* GOES INTERNATIONAL! \*  
\* \*  
\* The Well 'ard Swimming Club held \*  
\* its Summer meet at Glen Etive on \*  
\* 28th August and achieved \*  
\* international status. As well as \*  
\* our representative from the US of \*  
\* A (Dave) we gained three new \*  
\* members, two of which were from \*  
\* overseas. Peter represented \*  
\* Czechoslovakia whilst Martine \*  
\* represented Norway. \*  
\* \*  
\* Despite the temperature and \*  
\* vicious Scottish midges a ten out \*  
\* of ten emersion rate was achieved, \*  
\* helped by Derek and Jane's \*  
\* encouragement and imaginative \*  
\* forfeits for non participants (I \*  
\* was tempted to back out myself at \*  
\* the thought of some of them!). \*  
\* \*  
\* Other ethnic groups represented \*  
\* included vegetarians, nudists and \*  
\* alcoholics. The meet was \*  
\* concluded with a well soft cup of \*  
\* tea at a well expensive cafe. \*  
\* \*  
\*\*\*\*\*

RALPHS plea to remove the rope from the cascade below the famous Crewe dig did not fall on deaf ears! I can report that the last time I went down Giants (with a complete beginner) the bloody thing had gone and this is now a safe(?) fun(?) climb again.

#### BAMA COUNTY LECTURE PROGRAMME

An audio-visual caving spectacular! (as the handout describes it).

This show presents extraordinary decorations, sporting SRT caving (including a 900 ft entrance shaft) and jungle bashing, all set in pre-massacre China. Vunues are:

MANCHESTER Wed Nov 22nd 8:00 pm  
C9 Reynolds Building, UMIST and

BUXTON Sat Nov 25th 8:00 pm  
(silly buggers dont say where!)

Price is also missing from the handout  
Might be good if you can find/afford it



## INDIANA KEALY AND THE CAVERN OF DOOM

These kind of things never happen to Indiana Jones. If he was stuck on the wrong side of this desperately tight squeeze then he would find a hidden lever somewhere which would raise the roof or lower the floor by an inch or two and let him wriggle out. On the other hand it might throw him into a snake pit.

Caves of Derbyshire describes Lumb Hole as "An obvious resurgence in the floor of Cressbrook Gorge, only just above a lava bed. Possible to crawl in 30ft (9m), blocked by large boulders." Sounded good to me. A possible dig leading to caverns measureless to man. Must be worth a look.

One sunny afternoon, myself, Delyth and Thomas-Owen took ourselves off to Cressbrookdale in search of said hole and came across a quite unexpected sight. This was during the dry period and there was more water coming out than goes down Jackpot in normal (?) weather conditions. A crawl above the resurgence leads to a tight squeeze.

Realising that I had a severely pregnant wife and a 21 month old toddler waiting outside and that they would have to struggle back up a steep path if I got stuck I resolved to return and come back with a stronger team, but you know how these things get you. I looked at that squeeze - through a flat bedding plane with a trench and rock in the floor - and decided that I'd been through smaller things than that and it looked as if the passage continued beyond the squeeze anyway. I'd obviously be able to turn around.

I took my hat off and literally inched my way through. It was one of the tightest bits of cave passage that I've been through, worse than the squeeze in the Wind Tunnel. The passage turned a bend and was then blocked by large rocks. Somebody had been digging there. Looked as though it may repay some further work. Now to get out.

I couldn't turn around. Dammit!! I'll have to reverse the squeeze. I've done it before with Stan in Hydrophobia. Got my legs into it, my bum got stuck. Tried again. Same thing happened. On the third go my legs wouldn't go around the slight bend. Began to get worried here. Delyth was outside and probably getting worried now. She can't crawl in here in her pregnant state. How

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@  ANSWERS TO LAST EDITIONS  @
@  'SPOT THE DELIBERATE      @
@  MISTAKES' COMPETITION    @
@                               @
@ OK I'm just about sick of  @
@ you lot criticizing my    @
@ typinG/ speelling/ English/ @
@ knowledge/ sanity/ geography @
@ etc. If you can do any    @
@ better, clever clogs, type @
@ the bloody articles       @
@ yourselves!                @
@      --o-o-||-o-o--       @
@                               @
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will she get back up that hill with Thomas-Owen in tow to call the rescue out? The rescuers would either be my mates from the Crewe or some of the Eldon lads that I know. Like I said, these things never happen to Indiana Jones.

Fearing an embarrassment that I would never live down (and Delyth's wrath) I regained some composure and applied my small brain to the situation. The diggers had filled part of the bedding plane with spoil. If I dig that out I may be able to turn around. I pulled out a few rocks here and there and managed to manoeuvre myself to face the right direction. I took off my hat and belt. The damned lamp bracket broke. What else can you expect from a lamp that is 11 years old? Got my shoulder into the squeeze and exhaled, got my chest through, it hurt this time. One more exhalation and I was out, bruises on my chest. Delyth was sitting in the sun whilst Thomas-Owen threw stones into the stream. "Wondered where you got to." she said "I was just wondering how I was going to get Thomas-Owen up that steep hill."

Liam



## CAVING IN CO. CLARE, SOUTH WALES, MENDIP etc.

During a recent holiday in Eire I met a group of cavers from the Newbury caving Club. The girls with the cavers were going pony tracking which Chris greatly enjoys, so as I happened to have my caving gear in the boot of the car we tagged along with them. We did a couple of interesting trips (Cauchin 2 and the entrance pitch to Pouldrum, where water prevented further progress).

A couple of possible spin-offs may come from this. They are:

1) The \*\*\*\*\* Caving Club has not done very much in Derbyshire and expressed an interest in visiting the area. If we arranged a few trips, they are willing to reciprocate with a visit to South Wales (where they have good access arrangements) and/or Mendip (Otter Hole!).

2) Is anyone interested in a trip to Eire? There are billions of caves and most of them are antiglacial ie they are still forming and are very active and make good sporting trips.

The horrendous price of Guinness, food, petrol etc can be offset by renting a cottage which actually works out cheaper than staying at caving hostels if say, half a dozen people share.

Other attractions besides caving and pony trekking include cliff climbing (theres a club in Doolin), walking ('The Burron Way'), water skiing, traditional music, heavy drinking and trying to understand the locals. Anyone interested?

Mark L

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&
&   USEFUL TIPS FOR CAVERS No 1
&   If you go on a trip to Yorkshire
&   eg. Notts Pot, remember to take
&   your SRT gear!
&
*****
    
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LIAM AND DELYTH'S NEW ADDRESS IS:

Redacted

### CAVE TRAINING COURSES, 24th & 25th November

These 'workshop' courses are one day each and are organised by DCA. They are:

- 1) Advanced SRT including Self-Rescue. (Sat & Sun, Whitehall Centre)
- 2) Ladder and Lifeline Technique. (Sat & Sun, Whitehall Centre)
- 3) Cave Surveying. (Sat, Orpheous Caving Hut)
- 4) First Aid for Cavers. (Sun, Whitehall Centre)

All courses start at 9.30 am and cost £5.00 per person per course. Numbers will be limited. Accommodation at the Orpheus Hut is an extra £2.00. Bring any equipment you may need. Apply in writing to Hon. Treasurer, D.C.A., Mrs Jenny Potts, 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward. DERBY DE8 3FE.

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+  +-----+  +
+  |  GARDENING  |  +
+  +-----+  +
+
+  OVERSUITS For sale. 7 oz (same as
+  Troll suit) Nylon reinforced PVC.
+  Good value at £12.50 Lionel
+
+  BE ONE OF THE FEW and write an
+  article for the Newsletter. Great
+  Orme, Czechoslovakia, anywhere
+  Come on, even Tony Reynolds has
+  had one published! Mark
+
+  SWEAT SHIRTS With Club Logo. All
+  sizes £7.00 Hurry, going very
+  fast Ralph.
+
+  DURACELL BATTERIES Suitable for
+  'Petzel' Headsets, £1.90 Ralph.
+
+  WET SUITS wanted. One small, one
+  large. Mark or Gill.
+ + + + +
    
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## SOME INTERESTING FACTS ABOUT ELDON HOLE

Hutchins, in his 'Tour through the High Peak of Derbyshire' (1809) described Eldon Hole as

... "a dreadful chasm, about ten yards broad and eighteen long, with a depth not positively ascertained. Dr Plot, who endeavoured to fathom it, says that having let down 2,800 fathoms of line he did not find any bottom, nor the least appearance of water. Some years ago, a cruel wretch confessed at the gallows that he had robbed a poor traveller, and afterwards thrown him into this pit."

(2,800 fathoms - 3.18 miles).

Cotton (of fishing fame) lowered a line down and found it to be 884 yards deep, the last 80 being water.

(884 yards - 0.502 miles).

A Dr Short estimated the shaft to be 1,226 ft deep by timing falling stones.

During the reign of Queen Elizabeth, the Earl of Leicester had a servant lowered down on a rope (note that he didn't go himself). When he was hauled back to the surface, his hair had turned white and he didn't speak a single word again before he died, eight days later. This experiment was repeated with a cat. The cat didn't speak a word even before it's descent and it too died eight days later.

Locals around this time threw a goose down the hole. It reappeared several days later out of Peak Cavern (then better known as the "Devil's Arse") with all it's feathers singed off. It had apparently found a route which has since been lost and went via Hell.

In 1755 a farmer, fed up with loosing cattle down'th 'ole hired two labourers with wheelbarrows to fill it in. After six weeks of work, one of them made a partial descent to monitor progress. He returned with the opinion that they were wasting their time and the project was halted.

Until recent years, the hole was surrounded by a succession of stone walls. The average life expectancy of a wall was seven years as passers by could not resist the temptation to lob a few rocks down as they passed.

The first officially recorded descent was by Lloyd in 1770. The description of the descent is real Indiana Jones stuff with fraying ropes, falling rocks and huge hauling parties. Only in the last line of his account does he mention the 'two miners that went down with me...'. These two brave men are rumoured to have done the descent at least fifteen years previously.

Dye tests have revealed a definite connection with Peak Cavern (as have goose tests) with a 48 hour resurgence time. It is rumoured that blasting fumes from Eldon Hill Quarry can be smelled in Darncliffe Rift.

Edward King's rough survey based upon a description given to him by the wife of one of the miners who accompanied Lloyd reveals a shaft down to water in the floor of the main chamber. This has never been seen since. If it exists it was probably covered over during an attempt to fill the hole.

A E Baker, one of Derbyshires pioneer cavers, tried to free climb the main shaft in 1900. His first attempt was aborted at -70 feet and he returned to the surface by climbing a rope hand over hand. His second attempt six weeks later was a total success and he was hauled back to the surface after a nine hour climb. It looks as if someone has recently attempted this route as on my last visit I noticed bolts and chalk marks down to about -70 ft.

Lloyd described the passage which leads to the main chamber as 'now only about three yards high'. It must have been one hell of a place before all the stones went down!

Mark L