

S.C.C.
UPDATE OF MEETING HELD ON 7th MAY.

1994

Our next permit trip is to Top Sinks / Lancaster Hole through trip on Sat 21st. The permit limit is 8 persons only. Please stick to it, as the CNCC has put this on for a very good reason.

Your permit requests for 1995 have been dealt with, just awaiting replies now. All none permit requests have been listed and will be ^{dealt} with at meetings.

Your requests for more t-shirts and sweatshirts is being dealt with and hopefully all details next month.

A very BIG thankyou goes to Trevor Frankland for his most excellent large shield he has made for the club (3ft x 3ft). It will be used at all galas fetes and talks the club attends etc, Thanks again Trev.

Michael's video of training on Keith's wall and recent trips has come out very well indeed, I think we may have the next Sid Perov on our hands. Keep up the great work Mike.

It's Seamer gala on Sunday 19th June from 2pm-4pm all helping hands welcome!

Some annual subs are still overdue, you can pay at £5.00p per month if you wish. But please start paying soon, as new rope is required and it is not fair on paid up members when everyone can use the equipment. Speaking of being FAIR after our so called meeting? the Chairman and Secretary received some phone calls of complaint on the coarse events took. We have to listen to All complaints, requests, ideas etc and do pass them on, these are some of the comments following the 7th --:

1) Some of us have to travel some distance to meetings, and come along cos we have something to say and want to know whats going on. 2) Can't peop listen for an hour once a month? or is it too much for them. 3) If I want a piss up I can have it anytime. 4) If it continues I wont bother again. 5) I thought the club was for everyone not just the few? So members PLEASE let EVERYONE have a chance to have a say, after all it is only for an hour or so once a month. Surely this is not too much to ask of anyone, listen, and most of us will gain, if you dont listen you loose out, as members will leave, this means if you want more you will have to pay more, cos there will be less members, then it will be a club for the few! This has all been said 3½ years ago.

CORKINDALE WINDYPIT.

Lee, Jerry & Chalky have been digging in Corkindale windypit, a newly discovered pit near Sutton Bank, with some success. The windypit was originally discovered by a member of MSG who lives nearby, and because the entrance size is very constricted, he through the challenge to us (through Caves And Caving). The Entrance pit is very narrow but a chamber could be seen below, if only it could be dug out! the along came out motly crew, and over three trips at night and weekend they managed to enter the chamber.

Unfortunately the potential of this windypit is not great and a way on could not be found, although the lads are still looking at it. Another dig is going well in Kingsdale although up to press there are no details. I am sure Keith will furnish these as soon as something is forthcoming.

The caving season is now in full swing with trips almost every weekend so if you want a trip, then ring around.

The next permit trip is the through trip from Top Sinks to Lancaster Hole this coming weekend. Only 8 can do the trip, but Richard and Steven will be supporting the main effort by rigging the Lancaster end to Fall Pot, then leaving the system to do something else in the area.

We are making a weekend of it, so all are welcome.

Richard & Steven gave an illustrated talk on Caving, with the emphisis on First Aid and Rescue, to the St Johns Ambulance Brigade in Scarborough. After overcoming the nerves, we managed to bulsh..talk our way through it quite well, and thankfully they were a receptive audience, but.. never again! well, until the next time.

Coming up:

- Sat 21st May; Top Sinks to Lancaster, and other thigs
- Sat 28th Free
- Sat 4th June: Berkfell Cave
- Sat And Sun 4th/5th June: Cavers Fair at Austwick.
- Sat 11th June: Meeting at New Tavern
- Sun 19th June: Seamer Gale with Tower.
- Sat 25th Free
- Sat 2nd July: Notts Pot.



Free - but how about a donation to the local Cave Rescue Service?

Equipment and Safety

ABSEILING ACCIDENTS - PREVENTIVE MEASURES

There have been a number of uncontrolled abseil incidents recently, mostly involving Petzl Stop descenders. The Stop is no different from other descenders in that it is essential that the slack rope below the descender is held at all times when in use unless the descender is locked off. These incidents have been caused by depression of the red handle, accidentally or otherwise, without a controlling hand holding the slack rope. The red handle must not be squeezed unless the slack rope below is also being held.

Most problems have happened to beginners, so how can you get sufficient practice without suffering an accident?

Start with surface practice. Abseil from two metres up, where you will not suffer harm if you make a mistake, and practice threading, locking off and methods of increasing friction (e.g. extra karabiner). Lots of practice is necessary with any familiar equipment.

The following is a useful pitch head check for a Petzl Stop:

- 1) Descender karabiner - gate down, facing towards you for easy checking.
- 2) Thread rope - check diagram.
- 3) Check spring clip on front plate is fully closed (facing towards you).
- 4) 2" - 3" abseil to check running O.K. before removing long cowstail.

Any abseiling has potential problems with hair, clothing or chinstraps getting stuck in a descender.

For safety a slow steady descent is best - minimising chances of loss of control. Friction burns on the hands or glazing of the rope sheath.

The following techniques have been used to protect abseilers:

1) The first person down ties a knot above head height, which means that any uncontrolled descent will hit the knot rather than the floor (assuming there is no

intervening rock or excessive rope stretch). If the descent is controlled, the knot can easily be removed and retied for the next person.

2) A "bottom belay" - someone holding the abseil rope at the bottom, ready to pull hard if the abseiler goes too fast. Less satisfactory in the dark and wet at the base of a pitch which is a potentially dangerous place.

3) A safety rope, anchored slightly to the side to prevent twisting, is common on the surface but not suitable for long drops.

4) The lower end of the rope is paid out from the top as the abseiler descends, so that the descent is into a loop. This requires a rope twice the pitch length.

5) Industrial abseilers tow a Shunt with the same hand as that holding the slack rope, so that if that hand lets go, the Shunt grips the rope and you are held on a cowstail.

Paul Rumsden (C.J.C.) Freetime Activities

CAVE RESCUE CALLS AND MOBILE PHONES

After a recent caving accident a caver left the cave and used a mobile phone to dial 999 to call out the cave rescue. It was nearly an hour before the call actually reached the cave rescue service. Once they had been alerted, there was no further delay and the rescue was completed safely.

The problem? If you dial 999 on a mobile phone you do NOT get through to the normal emergency service run by BT, instead you get through to the mobile phone company's own operator, who in this case did not know the procedure for calling out cave rescue and alerted the Coastguard as being the nearest thing! Unfortunately, having dialled 999, you tend to take the rest for granted and the caller in this case, not unnaturally, didn't want to waste time trying to find a BT phonebox, believing that a call-out had been initiated.

Following this incident action is being taken to try to make sure the problem doesn't recur but in the meantime - if you do use a mobile phone for a cave rescue call, make sure the operator does know how to do this.

THE NORTH

If you have any information to pass on or have any queries about Northern access, please contact Council of Northern Caving Club's Conservation & Access Officer direct:

Phil Parker, 11 Manston Gardens,
Cross Gates, Leeds, LE15 8EY.
Tel. 0532-646406

MEREGILL

Recently a group of cavers ripped up turf to dam the stream running into Meregill Hole. The area is an SSSI so this came to the attention of English Nature and the dam was removed. The CNCC view is that during rescue situations it may be necessary to dam the stream and it would therefore be acceptable but, during general caving and with modern techniques it is unnecessary to dam the stream.

IBBETH PERIL

Please replace the gate over the entrance on departure - it is there to prevent dead sheep and other rubbish entering the cave system.

CASTERTON FELL

There has been some digging on the Fell recently for which no permission has been sought or given. You are reminded that this area is an SSSI and permission is required for ANY digging activity underground or on the surface. Failure to observe this will further complicate an already delicate access situation.

HAGG GILL

You are reminded that this cave is particularly sensitive to damage from inexperienced cavers and CNCC do not recommend that this cave is attempted by novice cavers.

BRAIDA GARTH FARM

During busy periods (most days) cavers parking at the roadside by the farm have caused problems by making access to the fields and farm track by agricultural vehicles impossible. Farmers are working 7 days a week! Please allow them adequate access to their property. Failure to park sensibly will lead to parking restrictions and ultimately, access restrictions.

CNCC HANDBOOK

Current edition on sale in caving shops.