

Scarborough

Caving Club



Meeting 5th July 1997.

4 Members present. Apologies from Jamie, Mark, Andy and Riggs.

Jamie has submitted a report, enclosed which the club thanks him for. He also wonders why despite repeated invitations no one has taken him up on any training. Anyone wishing any type of caving related training or just practice to tidy up loose ends Jamie is available, doesn't bite and is fully versed in the latest techniques contact him on 01947 602135. Jamie is also the person to ring if you are interested in buying some stainless steel maillons. He has 6mm and 8mm versions available at £3.80 and £3.20 each respectfully, remember that stainless steel does not rust and is unlikely to seize up.

Also enclosed is a copy of an article from the current issue of Descent in which the club features. The article was written by Pete Ryder of the Moldywarp Speleological Group at the request of Paul Monico the Northern News correspondent. Paul desperately needed an article to enter into this issue of Descent to ensure continued coverage of the northern area and had to ring round many people to find an article. Due to the apparent shortage of northern articles the club has therefore sent in several articles outlining recent digs and finds to Paul in the hope that they will be published. It is also hoped that the club will send in articles on a regular basis. Thanks go to those people who contributed to any of the items.

Sunday 6th July. Richard Wilsdon hired the Ryedale Swimming Pool in Pickering for an hour with members of the club being invited to attend and try their hands at diving. This was a great success and could be held regularly if member wish for only a nominal entrance fee. During the session we were joined by Steve Rushton who is partially sighted, he thoroughly enjoyed himself and expressed an interest in joining the club. Hopefully he will be made to feel welcome by all of us should he attend suitable trips. Thanks go to Richard for hiring the pool and to all those who helped, supplied equipment and attended which made this Try-Dive possible.

Keith has a contact who is selling G.P.S. 12XL hand held satellite navigation systems. These devices can be programmed with a 6 figure National Grid Reference and will direct you to it and back if necessary. A handy piece of equipment at a special price of £100, normally sold at £300+.

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Scarborough Caving Club is a member of the Council of Northern Caving Clubs

News from the Far North

BRIEF

MOLDYWARPS SG cavers and others have been continuing their long-standing work in the Northern Dales.

Quite a lot of attention has been paid to the windypits, slip rifts formed in Corallian limestone found along the southern edge of the North York Moors. The prime workers have been Ernie Shield and members of Scarborough CC. In Noodle End Windypit around 100m of new rifts have been explored, one of which leads to a new entrance that breaks out into the valley side close to the well-known climbing ground of Peak Scar. Near Scotch Corner, the new and rather constricted Corker Dale Windypit – a vertical rift around 15m deep – has been explored by Ernie Shield and the Scarborough twiglets.

Slip Gill Windypit was surveyed by a Moldywarps group in 1981 when the New Series was discovered, reached by a worrying squeeze alongside a rocking boulder that looked impassable but obligingly made room for you once you were in it! The main rift here

ended at an undescended pitch of about 10m in a very loose area with no safe belay. Recently, Ernie discovered another series of rifts by swinging off the 23m entrance pitch, 6m above the bottom of the ladder. A short passage led to an 8m pitch that joined a much larger rift parallel to the entrance series; this proved to be the same one as seen down the undescended 10m drop. The survey showed the new passage to total 65m, bringing the system to 236m in length.

Nearby Antofts Windypit also yielded a new series of rifts, including the sizeable Snail Cavern. There is also rather disturbing evidence of the slip rift's mode of formation with jagged broken edges of calcite where a geologically recent rift opened up, and similarly recent rockfall scars pockmarking the walls. Presumably, earth tremors or localised slips cause these rifts to suddenly widen by a few centimetres, precipitating showers of previously wedged rocks that form false floors and bridges separating the different levels of passage. Heaven help the caver who is un-

derground when such a movement takes place.

In the northern Dales much work has been carried out in Devis Hole Mine Caves, with Pete Roe, Robin Sermon and Ernie Shield being the principal protagonists. This work includes an ongoing dig in one of the mine levels, a serious proposition enlivened by collapses from above. A new series of natural passage has also been found; inserting Richard-the-ferret-Gibson in a previously unentered narrow rift proved rewarding. The exploration of a network of small but well-decorated passages is continuing.

In Weardale, Tim Elliott, Tony Marsden and Pete Ryder investigated Low Bishopley Caves in the summer of 1996. The caves consist of several wide-open entrances in a disused quarry beside the waste disposal site for Frosterley village, which for some reason have previously escaped cavers' notice. How many more are there like this? Four caves of 13m, 25m, 16m and 20m were surveyed; a thin man might well connect the first two.

Report: Pete Ryder

Caves of Dentdale

A SLIDE show and talk on the caves of Dentdale will be given on 2 August in Dent Village Hall, starting at 7.30pm. A small entrance fee of £2 will be charged, with proceeds going to a local cause. For more information contact Roy Holmes on 015396 25280.

Laughing Pot

AT the end of March a group of West Midlands CEG and Stockport CG cavers noted that a new hole had recently appeared near Flatstones Pot on Scales Moor.

The new cave was examined in early April; the head of a shaft was bolted and a vertical rift descended for 11m to a floor. At the foot of the pitch, left (south-west) led towards Flatstones Pot over a large block, beyond which the rift widened considerably at an aven but soon became too tight in all directions. To the right from the foot of the pitch the floor sloped down to a 2m drop into a choked rift and a possible dig. An aven above this point is too tight for progress. The total depth of the hole is 15m.

Report: Bob Pulford

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AN unseasonal period of remarkably dry weather during April this year has at last provided divers with the opportunity to get back into the water.

In the Alum Pot downstream sump, Jason Mallinson has added an impressive 180m of new line during a single dive. The length of the sump is now in the region of 780m; however, pushing work will soon be curtailed by the limits of the air reserves that the diver will be able to carry into the further and deeper regions of the sump.

In the east of the area two dives have been made in the important Black Keld system in Wharfedale. In Langcliffe Pot another dive has taken place in Poseidon Sump but, unfortunately, bad visibility has hampered further progress beyond what appears to be a partial choke of boulders at the current limit, 10m from base. Meanwhile, Phil Howson and Brian Judd have made a trial foray into a small and previously undived static sump in Stretch Cavern in the resurgence at Black Keld. This sump is located in a small chamber at the upstream end of a series of high-level, dry bedding planes which run above the underwater passage network. The preliminary investigation has seen about 4m of progress and initial indications suggest it will be possible to make further advances here using smaller tanks. A return is planned.

Divers have begun working again in the Terminal Lake sumps at Ingleborough Cave, the first diving activity in this cave since 1984, during the glory days of the Gaping Gill-Ingleborough Cave connection.

At Marble Steps Pot at Masongill, Rick Stanton has made another dive in the low and rather squalid sump to take the limit of exploration to around 270m from base. Interestingly, the sump

now appears to have turned direction and is heading towards Kingsdale (the previously explored section of passage heads west towards Rift Pot).

In the east of the region, divers have started work in Niddedale after more than a two-year absence. A team has begun relining the forest-infested downstream sumps at New Goyden Pot in an attempt to gain the 1994 limit of exploration at 190m into Sump 8. At the time of writing, lines are complete into Sump 7. It is also hoped that another team will commence work in the resurgence at Nidd Heads to push upstream, while the New Goyden team makes its way downstream.

In the Ease Gill resurgence area John Cordingley has connected Leck Beck Head with Witches Cave, while another team has located the elusive way forward towards Pippikin at the upstream end of Witches (see separate report).

Work also continues at Pippikin Pot, where divers are hoping to advance downstream towards Witches Cave (although the recent events at Witches are currently providing the main focus of attention). No ground has yet been gained at the current limit of exploration 200m into Sump 2, but an underwater alternative has been found to an awkward above-water traverse in Pooh's Revenge (a dry passage between Sumps 1 and 2) which should considerably ease logistics for heavily laden divers moving between the sumps.

Finally, at Otter Holes near Kendal divers have explored some 90m of large underwater passage which breaks surface in a sizeable airspace chamber and an unexplored underwater outlet. The new passage is located just downstream of the main sink for the cave, and it appears that there is better potential for new ground further downstream. Work is continuing.

Members Telephone & Car Details. (Update)

Shaun Aconley	01751 474717 C656 EVH	Ford Escort	Sea Green
Michael Appleby	01751 475165	Vauxhall Cavalier	Blue
Andy Brennan	01751 475028		
Jamie Dixon	01947 602135 H315 MDC	Vauxhall Cavalier SRI	Platinum (Silver)
Keith Dobson	01642 466044	VW Passat	
Peter Fambely	01751 432657 Work	01751 432474 ext. 214	
Jerry Gibbs	01723 354193 G804 AEH	Ford Sierra Estate 4x4	White
Mark Rowe	01723 870527 D842 PKU	Volvo 360 GLT	Silver
Pete Shaw	01723 583473		
Ernie Shield	01845 501424		
Rob Simpson	01723 354839	Vauxhall Nova	Light Blue
Chalky Thomas	01723 360775	VW Polo	Blue
Lee Vasey	01227 721989		
Mick Ward	01723 585921 M542 HRH	Ford Escort	Metallic Blue
Richard Wilsdon	01751 432953 G481 TNN	Fax 01751 432518 Ford Sierra Estate	Red

19 GAPING GHYLL -110m

Ingleborough, Clapham, North Yorkshire
SD 751 727. Alt. 400m

LOCATION

The Main Shaft and four subsidiary entrances to the Gaping Ghyll System are situated on the high, level moorland beneath the southern summit slopes of Ingleborough above Clapham Bottoms.

Approach from Clapham Village. From the northern end of the village, either follow the private nature trail through Clapham Woods (for which a small charge is made), or take the parallel rough road up to Clapdale Farm. Both routes are followed for about 1.5 kilometres to Ingleborough Show Cave and Clapham Beck Head - the resurgence for the Gaping Ghyll System. Beyond the show cave the trail continues, climbing the steep gorge of Trow Gill into a shallower valley. Here a well-trodden path runs north alongside a wall for a further 700 metres to a stile by the large collapse feature of Bar Pot. The path crosses a patch of limestone pavement with the inconspicuous Flood and Wade's Entrances to the right, before veering due north across boggy moorland and passing close by the more obvious Disappointment Pot shakehole on the left. Straight ahead, a meagre wire fence marks the end of a huge trench-like depression in the drift where Fell Beck is swallowed by the Main Shaft.

DESCRIPTION

The most renowned cave in Britain, Gaping Ghyll is an extensive and complex system of mainly low, horizontal tunnels and huge mud-filled chambers. There are four predominantly vertical entrance caves: Bar Pot, Flood Entrance Pot, Stream Passage Pot and Disappointment Pot, in addition to the magnificent Main Shaft - without doubt the most spectacular shaft in the UK.

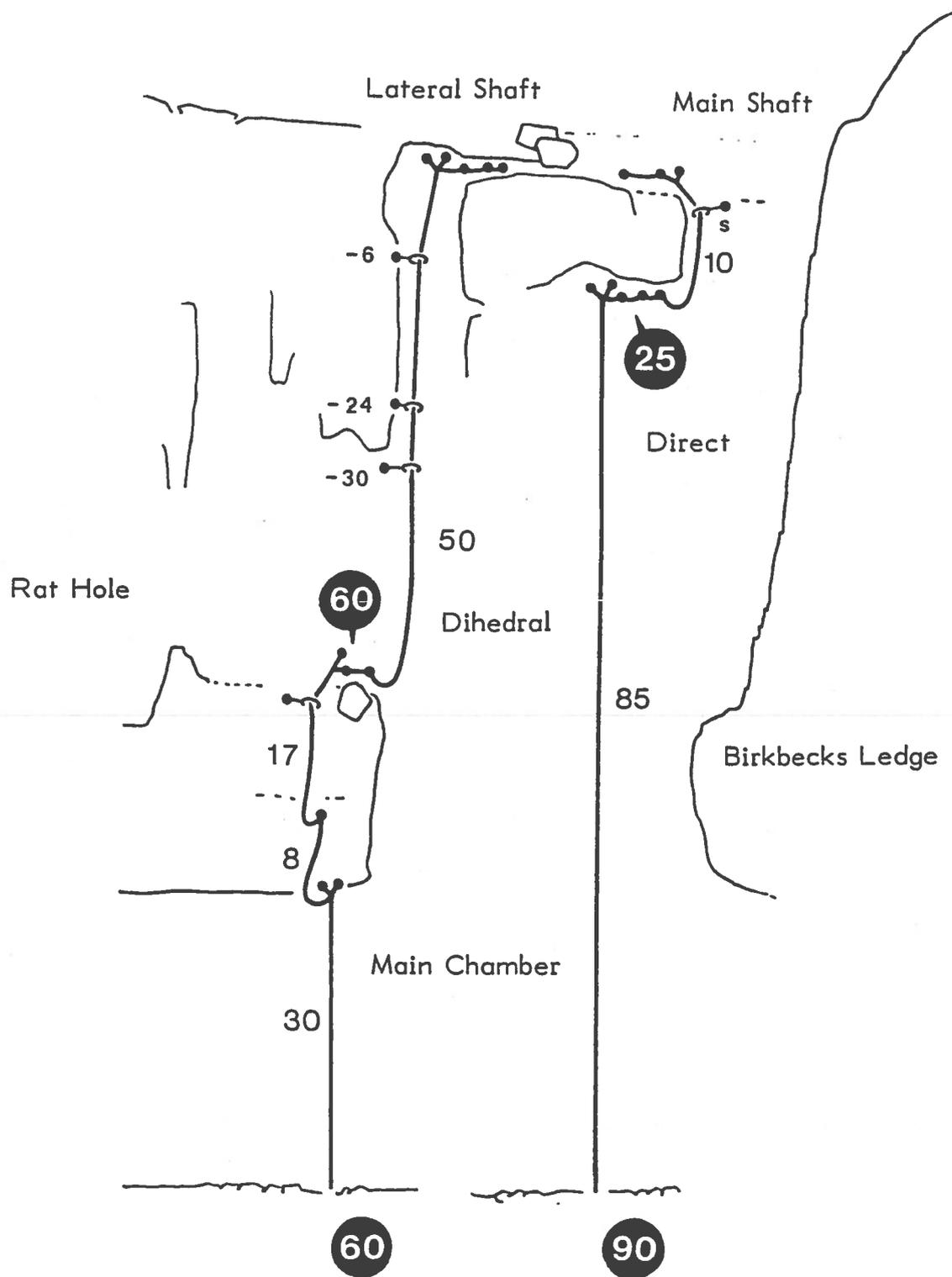
Main Shaft

The descent into the Main Chamber, almost 100 metres below, can either be made directly down the Main Shaft in a split pitch, or by the Lateral Shaft - an adjacent entrance with a spectacular free-hanging pitch of 98 metres, the longest unbroken pitch in Britain.

Direct Route

From the limestone slabs where Fell Beck spills over the lip of the Main Shaft, a traverse follows the exposed ledge into the west

19 GAPING GHYLL



25th JUNE 97

TRAINING OFFICERS REPORT TO ALL MEMBERS

1/ Please can everyone in the club try to ensure that when they reach the bottom of a pitch via an S.R.T. rope they try to avoid stepping on the rope as much as is humanly possible.

This is so the rope does not end up being cut by a sharp rock and lead to disaster at a later date.

If any member notices another accidentally stepping upon the rope please don't be afraid to mention it and if necessary chastise them.

2/ All members should have the following items in their S.R.T. bag:

a) A plastic whistle - this is in case of difficulty communicating at pitches, either large or more likely in flood.

There are three whistle signals adopted, namely:-

1 Blast = STOP

2 Blasts = UP

3 Blasts = DOWN

Members should remember these signals.

b) A good sharp knife - this is to aid in extricating either yourself or another member who may be hung up on rope.

There have been cases of people being hung up and in the flow of the water and eventually dying from hypothermia, if the worst comes to the worst and you find yourself in such a situation cutting the rope may be your only option and chance of survival.

c) Inside a waterproof container spare bulbs for your main lamp, spare batteries for the emergency light you should have with you, and a good idea to have a few painkiller as well.

3/ As a follow up to the survival blanket saga safety reports and real life incidents seem to suggest that it is wise to only ever carry a blanket inside your helmet (preferably a thin packet), anything else, and that includes even chocolate bars, should be elsewhere on your person.

Any items under the cradle of the helmet only serve to transmit

any shock to the cranium (For some of you, that's your head!) instead of being displaced by the cradle with possible splitting headaches ensuing, etc ...

4/ On the point of what type of sit harness should be used for caving I have extracted the following quote from Dave Elliot's book on S.R.T. :-

"Although there are many types of sit-harness available, the most suitable are those with individual leg-loops and an integral belt section. There is an important distinction between a caver's sit-harness (with its low attachment point for efficient re-climbing and designed to allow maximum leg movement while suspended) and a rock-climber's sit-harness. The latter is designed to minimise the effects of a fall and uses a higher attachment to keep the (fallen) climber upright and help assume a safe sitting position."

Therefore all members should preferably not use climbing harness's for caving in and any that do should look to replace their harness with one designed for caving as soon as their pocket will allow.

25 June 1997

Jame
Keith