

1992

2nd January Clearwell Caves

Nigel Burns

Very nice wander around these ancient, extensive workings; superb examples of mining.

17th January Newchurch-in-Pendle

Cheg Chester Dave Gough, Barry Sudell

Arrived early, to catch up with BS; discussed CDG training, Joint Hole dive arranged for some time early March. CC and DG arrived just after lock-in. Cracking session.



Photo Dave Gough

PC, Cheg Chester Barry Sudell; Brandy Bottle junction,

18th January Brandy Bottle Incline, Swaledale.

Cheg Chester Dave Gough, Barry Sudell

Took two motors; met up at Surrender Mill. Found Old Gang entrance in a sorry state, not far from the Mill. Its portal robbed of dressed stone; checked the water depth, as the only one wearing a wetsuit. It's deep, too deep, to enjoy a mile of submersion in dry kit. Asked farmer the location of Brandy Bottle, directed to the entrance about a mile or so distant. The entrance of the twin inclines is collapsed, entry via a small hole. Rails in situ down to the first level. At the base of the incline a partly collapsing area leads left, in the direction to Old Gang adit. Delighted at the place. Bit of a walk back. CC and DG to Nottingham BS and PC to Newchurch-in-Pendle: late night drinking and fun.

January undated (25th?) Goyden Pot, Northern section CDG rescue practice.

Martin Holroyd, Barry Sudell et al....

Northern Section, the casualty recovery exercise cut short, on account of heavy rainfall.

1st - 2nd February Dorothea Slate quarry, Glynn Mine, Gwernor Mine, Benallt Mine, Parys Mountain. North Wales

Cheg Chester, Nigel Burns Dave Gough

Glynn mine; timber ladder collapsed as CC was climbing. Falling from a height of four metres, neatly landed, standing in waist deep water still clutching the remains of the dodgy ladder. To Dorothea and Parys Mountain, both areas of industrial archaeology. A cracking weekend in fair weather.

February undated BEC Hut

Solo

Weary of repeated demands to interpret yet another half assed idea of how to design a heating system. And costing various unnecessary, complicated features, by those who have no concept of real time running costs. Without giving any notice, during midweek, installed one heating system, free of any cost Perhaps, will now be left in peace.

18th February Lost Ken Pearce

22nd February Hydraulic Shaft, Smallclough, Nenthead

Cheg Chester, Nigel Burns, Barry & Ceily Sudell, Paul Thompson, Terry Bolger, Darren Hind, John Cooper, Stuart McManus

The group split into two teams. Most going to dig out the shaft adjacent Hydraulic Shaft. Others collecting mineral specimens; TB videoing. Having dammed the small stream, work began. CC on lifeline, descended the electron ladder, to remove debris from, what he assessed to be timber staging over a potential, deep shaft below. After a while CC asked for a second lifeline; deployment was accompanied by much piss taking. Clearing debris, CC requested assistance. NB descended, lifelined by SM; PC remained lifelining CC. NB joined CC and began to stack spoil in the adjacent, solid floor cavity. On lifted a small stone, where he was kneeling, CC exposed a small hole. Calling, "I can see through the boards, its open below", the entire timber staging, debris and framework, he was kneeling on, fell away beneath him; the ensuing noise, prolonged. CC's plummet was arrested, leaving him swinging; dangling above the deep, dark, yawning maw, watching rock, and timber tear away the intermediate timber staging. CC was pulled into the adjacent, solid cavity, by NB. A hundred foot of ladder was swiftly rigged; so, CC could complete his project. Disappointment: it entered a far distant, but known section of Rampgill. Recovered NB and CC, along with all the equipment. On arrival, TB videoed the aftermath. A cracking, riotous night followed drinking session between the Miner's and the Crown.

29th February Youd's Level (aka Ringing Rake Sough), (aka Gentlewoman's Pipe)

K Wills, Barry & Ceily Sudell, Nigel Burns

Excellent trip, examined the early mining techniques and surviving handpicked features of Gentlewoman's Pipe workings. A superb place. Stopped at Paul Thompson's place, Green Road, Buxton; after a superb curry and a PU in the Eagle. Found later, Dave Gough was woken in the early hours of Sunday by the Feds, acting on a phone call from John Cross, concerned the party had not returned to the Hut. JC had not noted that sleeping bags, foodstuffs and equipment had gone; the place cleaned spotless and tidied.

1st March CDG, Central Committee Meeting, MJ's place, Derbyshire

Russell Carter, John Cross, Julian Griffiths, Mike Jeanmaire, K Wills, Clive Westlake, Barry Sudell.

14th March Pegasus AGM at the hut.

As ever, short and sweet, no Politics, no Egos, just housekeeping: session the Dev'.

March undated BEC Heating

Mac rang; chuckling as he described the committee's confusion finding a heating system installed and working. Not one able to think who had done it? One rather sad comment from the wife of one committee member; "this is outrageous, who gave the authority?". Later, the appearance of the heating system was discussed in the bar, even though Mac kept prompting, "Who, around here do we know is a Plumber?" none guessed, good.

22nd March Smallcleugh, Middleclough, Bogg Shaft, Hodgesons Low, Carrs; Cumbria
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Terry Bolger, Big John Cooper, Paul Thompson, Dave Hind,
Barry & Ceily Sudell, Nigel Burns

An excellent weekend scampering around the place; long trip Saturday, shortish on the Sunday. Into huge stopes above Smallclough; surviving remains included a well-crafted wooden latrine box, with handles. Along with trams, tools, etc. As this mine gains visitors hopefully the obscure entry to these discreet stoped out workings will remain inviolate. Throughout the weekend, many artefacts examined; yet all left in situ. Assessed the huge exposed, Bogg Shaft plumbing system: large vertical pipes stand loose in the shaft. Suggested the powerful discharge of this intricate water system, exiting Cappleclough High Level, must have had some form of weir, to reduce the force of the water issuing the end of the pipe. Otherwise such a powerful discharge would scour away passage walls. Suggested locating where the pipework leaves the massive, unstable shaft, somewhere up above and attempt follow it.

17th – 20th April Cowclose Mine, Derbyshire

Dave Gough, Cheg Chester, Pete Forster, Alan Steele, Nigel Burns

The North Staff's boys deployed their winch on Founder shaft. Enjoyed an extensive wander around this truly enormous complex. Many signs of early mining methods and features. Most of the Farmers in this area restrict access solely to the North Staff's. Many areas of these 17th/18th century workings are superbly handpicked, passages intersecting bodies of lead ore; the workmanship is simply delightful. Many fine examples of working pipe veins: cracking.

9th May CDG AGM and Dinner, Copper Beech, Abercrave

Cast of many.

Usual poor fare, nice to catch up. Great fun in the upstairs bar, found it unmanned; Dark Shamrock Crew rumbled after three glorious hours.

15th May Holcombe Quarry

K Will, Martin Bishop

Examined suitability to conduct CDG training; shallow, but easy access to water's edge.

24th- 25th May Bogg Shaft, Smallclough, Nenthead

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Terry Bolger, Big John Cooper, Paul Thompson, Darren Hind, Nigel Burns, Martin & Sue Bishop

Into Bogg Shaft to follow the two foot diameter pipes. DG began climbing the collapsing shaft sides, using an alpen stock to form steps in the shite shale rock and loose debris. DG is a fearless, supreme climber.

31st May Joint Hole
Barry Sudell, Martin Bishop
Tourist trip; MB retired early on, with dry suit issues.

4th June Wookey Hole
Neil Harman
Conducted NH through his test: awarded him a well-deserved pass. Conditions were appalling.

16th June Wookey Hole
Kevin Wills, Martin Bishop
Report of broken line; checked same through to 20 then to 22; no damage found or belays adrift. Exiting KW offered check the Shallow route line; all good.

20th June Brandy Bottle incline to Hard Level, Swaledale
Barry & Ceily, Cheg Chester, Nigel Burns, Dave Gough, Martin & Sue Bishop, Pauline Cronin, Kay, friend of Ceily's, Liam Gough
The plan was for most to do the through trip; several visiting the bottom of the incline before exiting. Straightforward trip, along a mile of chest deep-water adit. Stability of the adit questionable, progress required passing beneath collapsing, dodgy roof sections.

27th June Cowclose Mine, Derbyshire
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Pete Forster, Alan (Fat Al) Steele
Winch, again, courtesy of the North Staff's boys; PF and AS ran the winch and surface support. Further exploration of this huge complex.

5th July Trident Diving, Fishponds Road, Bristol (Open water diver 9212315545)
Five other students.
Experiencing pressure from two Somerset members, and their supporters, for two of their non caving chums to join the CDG, circumventing the CDG Part I Test, by using the PADI basic open water qualification. Decided to quell argument by quietly enrolling in the basic open water course with Instructor Dale Roberts, Trident Diving, Fishponds, Bristol. Did not inform DR of CDG membership; only possessing some dive experience. Training conducted midweek with eight others, in Downend swimming pool with two trips to Brixham. Unfortunately, found PADI dive training, swimming pool exercises, lectures and the two, shallow, brief, open water dives, as superficial as feared. Very much aimed at getting a diver through an introduction course and into the water, as swiftly as practicable, offering further assorted PADI courses. Appalled, during the "Written Exam", as DR wandered among the separated desks, pointing out correct answers, on the objective question paper, to those struggling. Announced PADI certification achievement at the Somerset section meeting. Explained, in detail, the difference between the content of the PADI Manual for open water qualification, and actual, practical training and exam. Finally pointed out the PADI basic open water course does not come anywhere close to the practical skills or knowledge required to pass the CDG Part One Test.

10th July Smallclough Mine, Nenthead, Cumbria
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Liam Gough, Nigel Burns, K Wills
Accessed a previously undisturbed area of the mine. Containing a staggering number of features, artefacts and remains; trams, windlass, wheel barrows, bang, fuses, powder boxes, and much, much more. The area extensive; thrilled at the finds; all left in situ.

22nd July Wookey Hole

Martin Bishop

Recently purchased dive bottles appear significantly heavier than existing; dived to 22, assessing trim, and weight required; need about one kilogram less.

Dark Shamrock, Ireland.

Multiple dives conducted at Poulbehan, Pollaloughabo and Moran's Cave

1st August Pollaloughabo – Poulbehan; The Dark Shamrock connection

Nick Geh, Martyn Farr

After preparatory dives, the link was finally complete; length of through dive 855m.

2nd August Pollaloughabo

Nick Geh, Martyn Farr, Tony Donovan

Struggled with the huge line reel manufactured by TD to hold a British Telecom 500m reel of 6mm line. The weight enormous, low water conditions meant having to drag it through the mud and cow shit to the sump pool beyond; difficulty manoeuvring it along the low submerged bedding. Reached the pot; plummeted to the bottom, into deep silt. Secured the line at the base of the pot with a lead weight. Buoyancy all to hell; the heavy reel sank into the deep, soft silt. Tried rolling it, without success; silt too soft. Found best to drag it, though route finding a joke. Reasoned that in such a large passage, with such huge flow rates, a central channel may exist, indicating flow. Dragged the reel southeast, encountering an irregular line of black cobbles. Turned east, following the meandering channel through steep silt banks. Initial deployment of this monster reel was the worst part of using it. Lost the line of blackened cobbles as silt caught up with the diver. After saw neither cobbles nor line reel; assessed had left the reel at 100m; found later, distance was actually 75m, at -19m. Delighted to have found a flow channel.

3rd August Moran's Cave, Kinvarra

Nick Geh, Martyn Farr, Tony Donovan

After much searching, spoke to a local who directed the team to the entrance. Informed land owned by Agnes Lynch, Kinvarra, living next door the Post Office. During fierce encounter the others stayed in the motor. Sherpa'd for MF to one of the sumps pools. Whilst MF away, surveyed the cave with TD and NG. The description in the 1980s UBSS book is entirely incorrect. Rather than a two-foot-high bedding, leading to a series of water filled rifts, it's a sixty metre x eighty metre x two metre high chamber; stupendous place, with a poteen still.

4th August Dark Shamrock Traverse

Nick Geh, Martyn Farr, Tony Donovan

Spent the day recovering stage bottles and more surveying.

8th August Poulbehan

Nick Geh, Martyn Farr, Tony Donovan

Area of the Black Hole searched, in low flow conditions; the place might be a T junction rather than a large, long radius bend in the passage?

7th - 8th - 9th August Moran's Cave, Kinvarra

Nick Geh, Martyn Farr, Tony Donovan

Successive upstream dives progressed to 300m from base; the huge boulder ruckle, the "Bastille", still hinders downstream progress.

29th August Founder shaft, Cowclose Mine
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Pete Forster, "Fat Al", Liam Gough, Martin Bishop
Bank holiday weekend; excavating the back filled coffin level at around -100m; this short cut will likely shave two hours off journey time to the farther reaches of the mine.

September undated (12th?) Tormarton, Wiltshire
Jeff Price
Contacted by the farmer, a hole had opened in a field. Met the farmer, at a road junction, found hole to be eleven metres long and nine metres deep. Likely formed by movement of valley side; believe it classed a "Gull Cave"? JP has the details.

October undated BEC Heating
Mac enquired if the thank you letter had arrived, discussed at the recent BEC committee meeting. Answered no; not holding breath: eaten bread is soon forgot.

11th October CDG central committee meeting. Peak Forest – Ball Eye Mine
Unnecessary, lengthy meeting. Picked up Nigel Burns, from the Hut quite late; made for Ball Eye Mine. Managed examine some of the surviving surface features before dark.

Illegible entries

21st November Smallcleugh Mine, Nenthead
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry & Ceily Sudell, Malcolm Debbage, Malcom Scothton, Pete Forster, Darren + others
Invited other Pegasus members to wander these mines; cracking, managed visit several previously unseen places. CC a consummate guide. A night of fun between the Crown and the Miner's.

22nd November Killhope
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Pete Forster,
Visited this show mine en-route to Bristol, the others making straight home. Though closed for the season, the processing features are readily accessible outside.

Christmas mining extravaganza, Nenthead.
Cheg, Aileen & Catherine Chester, Nigel Burns, Dave Gough, Martin & Sue Bishop, John Gough, Barry & Ceily Sudell.

24th December Bogg Shaft, Smallcleugh
Cheg Chester, Nigel Burns, Dave Gough, Martin Bishop, Barry & Ceily Sudell
DG succeeded in climbing the horrendously loose walls of this large diameter shaft. Attempting locate where one of the pipes assumes the horizontal, heading to the surface. DG climbed, spirally, up around the collapsing walls to finally reach "Spill Way Passage". Silence reined as DG disappeared up this desperately loose shaft; debris constantly fell; expected to see DG plummet past the Team's vantage point. Enormous delight after half an hour; DG announcing he'd found the passage and was now safe inside. DG soon found a hole in the floor, which entered through the roof of a small side chamber. Following his voice, located the chamber; will need a ladder, deployed from above to access the above. Celebrated DG's superb climbing skills and sheer nerve, with drink, food and pool, long into the night. A magnificent climbing achievement by Dave Gough.

25th December Perry's Dam

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry and Ceily Sudell, Martin & Sue Bishop
Bracing walk in deep snow and freezing conditions, up valley to Perry's Dam; no running water anywhere. Keith and Hazel provided pre-Christmas dinner drinks. Game invented by Ceily; create a cocktail, from anything... many casualties following her Green Cabbage cocktail creation. Beware of female Lancastrians bearing cabbages.....

26th December Scaleburn Branch, Rampgill, Nenthead

Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry and Ceily Sudell, Martin Bishop
Could not understand the curious arrangement of spoil in a low chamber which appeared to pass left and above the adjacent main adit blockage. Examination of the debris exposed a secreted trapdoor. Lifted lid; descended an excavated shaft, dropping back down into the main passage. Scampered off; as MB strode into a side passage, PC saw the Horse Whim, screamed stop to MB, who froze. In the dark chamber floor, a yard in front MB, a sixty-foot shaft, flooded at its bottom; MB quietly commented, "perhaps you should go first from here on, you know what to look for". Envious, BS examined a niche where miners sat to eat their snap, finding an amazing array of clay pipes on the small ledges. At the end of the main passage found a well-constructed gate, incorporating a hydraulic method of locking; an impressive, clever locking system. A superb trip, and serious session: all the team pointedly avoided speaking of cabbages or cocktails.



Horse Whimsey, Scaleburn Vein, Rampgill

Photo Dave Gough

26th December Cappleclough to Rampgill through trip

Cheg Chester, Barry Sudell

Just before midnight, unsure as to who suggested this trip; the bar had closed, located the frozen wetsuits in the van. Ran cold water into the bath to try thaw out and get them

on. The brief walk to Cappleclough was enough to form frost on the suits. Scampered up along the incline to the pre-laddered ore bin; up into Smallclough, to do the circuit under the mountain to Proud's Sump. Dropping down, exited Rampgill; ran back to the cottage, found all sound asleep. BS delighted, beside himself at the array of superb engineering.

27th December Carrghyll Mine, Blackburn Level Garrigill, Scaleburn Vein Rampgill, Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry and Ceily Sudell, Martin Bishop
Morning: Carrghyll Coal Mine. Invited by Neville Richardson, Owner, son of Eric Richardson; author of the book on the local lead mines. DG pissed off NR by jamming the pneumatic hammer solidly between coal and roof. Oops.
Midday: Blackburn Level. Extensive mine works, some relatively recent, with superb surviving underground cages.
Evening: Scaleburn Vein. Examined the purposely blown ore bins along the passage from Horse Whim chamber. To assess how best to forepole through them. NR appeared, to join the session at the Crown.

30th December Bogg Shaft, Smallclough
Cheg Chester, Dave Gough, Nigel Burns, Barry and Ceily Sudell
DG ascended the shaft once again to drop a ladder down the short shaft to the small chamber. All up, into the pipework passage, the pipework has had a roof of longitudinal timber planking fitted to it, to keep off the drips and reduce corrosion. Began to poke at the obvious blockage, discussed a plan at length.

31st December Hunters Lodge - Mendip
Straight forward drive back south. Dropped off NB in Bristol; stopped at Mac's place. Meal in Wells and a session in the Hunters.