

PEAK DISTRICT MINES HISTORICAL SOCIETY

NEWSLETTER No: 25

10th June, 1965

Meetings:

Weekend: June 19th-20th: Field Meeting - Swaledale Area.

Leader: Mr. A. E. Marsh

Saturday: 12.30 p.m. Meet Punch Bowl Inn, Swaledale.  
Grid Ref: Sheet 90, 987984.

1.30 p.m. Tour of Old Gang Mines and lead smelting mills. The area between Gunnerside Gill and Arkengarthdale is extremely interesting from a mining point of view and an interconnected network of levels spans the whole area. Many levels may be entered for a considerable distance.

If time allows a visit will be made to the Brandy Bottle Level. This is an inclined plane and is in good condition, it is dry in the upper levels and is not sufficiently dirty to require a change of clothing.

6.00 p.m. Campsite at Surrender Lead Smelting Mill.  
Grid Ref: Sheet 90, 991999.  
This is an excellent site adjacent to the minor road running from the Punch Bowl Inn in Swaledale across to Arkengarthdale.

Sunday: 10.00 a.m. Gunnerside Gill. Short walk upstream from Sir Francis Level with underground visits to levels in the vicinity of Bunting Level which links up with Brandy Bottle Level and Moulds Level in Arkengarthdale. Return to Sir Francis Level.

1.00 p.m. Underground exploration of Sir Francis Level. This involves wading in thigh deep water in the first section of the level. After traversing more than three quarters of a mile one reaches the main workings which include a large underground engine room. The hydraulic engine, formerly used for winding and pumping, is still in situ.

6.00 p.m. Estimated time for termination of meeting.

Additional Note: The best route to Swaledale from the Sheffield area is via A.1. turning off for Swaledale at Catterick. Proceed through Richmond and Reeth to Punch Bowl Inn at Feetham which is  $2\frac{1}{2}$  miles east of Gunnerside. Allow  $2\frac{1}{2}$  hours from Sheffield.

Sunday, July 4th: Field Meeting: Alderley Edge, Cheshire.

Meet: Alderley Edge Railway Station at 10.30 a.m.

Leader: Mr. G. Warrington.

For full details of itinerary see newsletter number 23.

Saturday, July 10th - Lecture Meeting - Department of Geology, University,  
Mappin Street, Sheffield, 1.

Mr. H. M. Parker will give an illustrated talk on "Underground Photography"

Time: 3.00 p.m.

COTTAGE:

Extension of planning permission for use of Magpie Cottage as a field centre has been granted for a further three years.

WARNING OF DANGEROUS SITUATION - ELDON HOLE (copy of letter received)

On Saturday night when members of an exploration party from the Eldon Pothole Club were withdrawing from Eldon Hole, a large scale rock fall occurred from the upper part of the hole. A big limestone flake became detached and fell into the main shaft taking with it at least 10 tons of other rocks as it went. The flake was the one that is normally either straddled or sat upon just below the lip of the hole on the "top side" from where it is usual to climb down to the "ledge".

This rock, which must have weighed at least 2 tons, has been climbed over for many years without seeming unsafe until a month ago when it was reported to have moved slightly.

On this occasion, just as one of the Eldon Club members was climbing past it, it pulled away from the loose earth that had held it for years, badly crushing the man's knee and fell onto the "ledge", taking other rocks with it, before falling into the main shaft. Luckily everyone had climbed out of the shaft though two members were still on the ledge when the boulder crashed past them - actually passing over the head of one man. Much of their equipment was crushed and completely ruined!

Upon inspection of the upper "scramble" of the hole many of the large flakes are seen to be only embedded in loose earth and not attached to the rock walls. These flakes now seem to be loose and in danger of falling! As far as can be seen the whole of this slope is now extremely dangerous with many large rocks loosened from the impact of others bouncing off them.

The ledges in the main shaft will also be covered with loose rubble and the entrance into the chamber will almost certainly be blocked.

The Eldon Pothole Club intend to inspect the pothole and will send in a report as soon as it is completed, and I consider that descending Eldon Hole before the upper slope has again consolidated will be extremely dangerous.

JOHN NEEDHAM

22nd May, 1965.

Derbyshire Cave Rescue Organisation

NEWS OF MEMBERS:

Mike Luff, the Cottage Warden, has notified a change of address to: No. 1, Palace Mansions, Marlborough Road, Buxton.

Dr. John Robey, left the University of Sheffield at Easter and is now working in Stafford, all correspondence should be sent, for the time being to his home: 35 Beresford Street, Nottingham.

Dr. Trevor Ford is spending six months at Kansas, U.S.A. and will be returning on October 1st. Any manuscripts for consideration for the Bulletin may be sent during this period to the Hon. Secretary, address below.

Congratulations to John and Josephine Travis of Nottingham on the arrival of a daughter, Iris Helen.

Spanish Expedition 1965 - As many members will know an expedition of some 30 British potholers will be going to Spain in July. The following Society members will be taking part: Tony Huntington, Michael Walker, Geoff Holt, Reg and Margaret Howard, Paul Deakin, Ron Bridger, Mike Smith, Dave Gill, and Sheena MacPherson Stewart. We wish them all a successful trip.

WINCH

Urgently required for field work - a HAND WINCH - would any member knowing the whereabouts of such a winch for sale or gift please contact either the Secretary or Mr. H. M. Parker, 10 Blackbrook Rd., Lodge Moor, Sheffield, 10, (Tel: Sheffield 31223), or any Council Member.

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Hon. Secretary: Mrs. P. E. Lunn, 28 Kenbourne Road, Nether Edge, Sheffield, 7.  
Tel: Sheffield 50170.