



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular 2004/4, July-Sept. 2004

NEXT DCA MEETING

DCA Council - Sat. 27 November 2004, 10am. Monyash Village Hall

The Hall will be open from about 9.30am with tea, coffee and biscuits on tap. The Old Smithy Cafe, next to the Pub, does an excellent breakfast from about 9am.

DCA AGM 2005 - Sat. 19th. February 2005, 10am. Monyash Village Hall

DCA MINUTES ARE NOW ON THE WEBSITE

Minutes of DCA Meetings and Officers Reports to Council Meetings will now be posted on the DCA website as soon as possible after the meeting has taken place. (They are in pdf format and can be downloaded and printed using the pdf reader already on the website.) Already posted are the AGM 2004, April and July 2004 Council Meeting Minutes. Our thanks to DCA webmaster Paul Johnson for arranging this.

PUBLIC LIABILITY INSURANCE

At the DCA Council Meeting on 17th. July the subject of P.L. Insurance for cavers was discussed in detail. (See item 5.5.c of the Minutes and P.T.Mellors' Report - now posted on the DCA website.) An outline offer of renewal had been received from Perkins Slade, DCA's brokers, but we were not sure of the situation re. BCA. It was agreed that in principle DCA wished to support a national insurance scheme through BCA but had a responsibility to its insured members not to refuse the Perkins Slade offer until we were certain that a viable alternative was in place. It was felt we had insufficient information to make a final decision at the meeting on 17th. July but it could not be left until the next Council Meeting on 27th. November. Hence a meeting of DCA Officers has been arranged for **22nd. September** at which a decision will be made and those insured through DCA will be informed immediately afterwards. DCA's Legal & Insurance Officer and BCA's Insurance Manager are liaising closely in seeking the best way forward. The Officers' Meeting is at **8pm. at the Orpheus C.C. Cottage, Parsley Hay**. If any members would like to be present at this meeting they are welcome - contact Jenny Potts if you don't know how to get there.

CONSERVATION / ACCESS

If you have any queries or problems relating to access or conservation in the region you can email all the DCA Conservation and Access team members on access@theDCA.org.uk. Team members are:

Conservation & Access Officer, John Taylor: Tel. 01663-734918, Mob. 0786-6705149, Em. jtaylor@uk.tiauto.com

Access Officer, Iain Barker: Tel. 0114-2530112, Mob. 0771-0689704, Em. iainbarker@peakland.freeserve.co.uk

Conservation Officer, Dave Webb: Tel. 0115-840-1109, Em. davidwebb12@ntlworld.com (*Note amended email address.*)

Devonshire Mine

On 9th. September the entrance to Devonshire Mine was reported to be blocked by large rocks which had been deliberately placed against the gate. Enquiries established that this had been done by persons unknown without the permission of the Landowner and that the Landowner was happy to have the rocks removed and access re-instated. A working party has now cleared the gate and a notice will be placed by the entrance to the mine explaining the situation with regard to access. It appears that there may have been some problems recently affecting other residents in the road - in particular thoughtless behaviour by young people coming down the road after a visit - and this has upset someone locally. (Problems reported relate to noisy behaviour, dropped litter, etc.) It is important to emphasise to all party leaders that young people **MUST BE SUPERVISED PROPERLY**, both when walking up the road to the Mine and when they leave after their visit.

CO₂ In Knotlow/Hillocks and Pollution in Knotlow

Excess CO₂ was reported in the Knotlow/Hillocks connection (Meccano Passage) in mid-July and confirmed later that week by other cavers using detector equipment. Later in the month other cavers reported that the problem appeared to be no longer present. As always, be alert for the symptoms of excess CO₂/ depleted oxygen levels which appear intermittently in this system.

Dave Webb, DCA Conservation Officer, has now replaced the book in the ammo box at the base of the climbing shaft of Knotlow Mine. The format of the new book is slightly different to allow one page per entry and to encourage a fuller report and contact details from those who wish to provide more information. For example it helps to know the prevailing surface weather conditions and if there is any muck spreading going on. Otherwise everything is back to normal and we would thank you in advance for your continued support. Dave has placed a summary in the box of the most recent entries prior to the last book becoming waterlogged. Please don't hesitate to contact Dave or a member of the team at access@thedca.org.co.uk if you need, or wish to provide, further information. Many thanks again for your help.

Youd's Level Pollution

Following on from concerns regarding pollution in the entrance adit to Youd's Level expressed at Underground Conservation Forum and Cave Liaison meetings, DCA Conservation Officer Dave Webb visited the site with Dave Ottewell of the Environment Agency on July 13th 2004, as planned, to inspect and take samples. As the site is in an SSSI it is necessary to pass through the pollution in order to carry out monitoring duties - clearly an unsatisfactory state of affairs. Dave Ottewell has submitted the samples taken for analysis and we are hopeful that something positive will come of our efforts.

Peak Cavern Access

Access to Peak Cavern will begin again at the end of October and continue till March next year. As usual, please contact John Beck to make your booking: email john.beck6@btinternet.com (*note amended email address*) or write enclosing S.A.E. and remember each member of the party must be prepared to show evidence of P.L. Insurance cover.

Derbyshire Dales District Council proposals to require a licence for all groups wishing to abseil on Council owned land

In June DCA Secretary Jenny Potts was made aware of proposals by DDDC to require a Licence/Insurance and to place other restrictions on groups abseiling on Council owned land. Although this appeared to refer in the first instance to High Tor, Matlock, it could also apply to other sites and may therefore have the potential to affect caving. Following submissions by DCA and other local interests the Planning Policy Manager has written to say that he is currently reviewing all the comments DDDC have received on this matter with a view to presenting them to Committee in due course. He also said he would endeavour to advise interested parties of the date that this matter will be reported to Committee.

DCA Handbook Updates

The full set of eight DCA Handbook update sheets has now been sent out to all members as follows: New front cover; 2:3/2:4; 2:5/2:6; 2:7/2:8; 2:11/2:12; 2:15/2:16; 3:9/3:10 and 4:1/4:2. If you haven't received these or if any are missing, please contact Jenny Potts.

"The Lead Legacy"

A new book has just been published by the Peak District National Park Authority Lead Rakes Project in partnership with English Heritage and English Nature, 2004. "The Lead Legacy - The Prospects for the Peak District's Lead Mining Heritage" by John Barnatt and Rebecca Penny. 111 pages; includes photos, maps, surveys in colour. You can obtain a copy for free but you will need to pay for postage (probably about £3.00+). Contact Phillipa Davey, 01629-816383, to request a copy.

EVENTS, TALKS & FILMS, ETC.

China Caves International Symposium, 24-26 September, R.G.S. London.

Details for the China Caves International Symposium are now available online at www.andyeavis.com. This site will be updated regularly as more details about the programme are confirmed. In the meantime, there is a feedback form with which you can register interest and reserve accommodation in London. If you would like further information about the hotels available, please email mel@andyeavis.com. We look forward to hearing from you and if you have any queries at all or would prefer to receive information by regular post please contact Andy Eavis or Mel Hannam either via this email address or by calling 01482 648658.

Cave Art & Archaeology, Tuesday 28th. Sept. at Peak District Mining Museum, Matlock Bath

Starting at 7.30pm. (Museum open from 6.30pm.) Free admission. Two slide presentations:

7.30 - 8.30pm. Cave Archaeology in the Creswell Region. Speaker Dr. Andrew Chamberlain, University of Sheffield.

8.30-8.45pm. Interval.

8.45-9.15pm. Cave Art in the South of France. Speaker Bernard Chandler (Featuring Lascaux Cave, famous for its cave paintings)

Notes:

1. A unique opportunity to hear about Cave Archaeology in the Creswell region (situated on the Notts/Derbys border). Creswell has recently been in the 'media spotlight' following the discovery of Cave Art in one of the caves - and meet a potholer who visited the 'original' Lascaux Cave in France.
2. Tea, coffee, soft drinks, etc. will be available in the Museum.
3. Museum bookshop will be open for sales.
4. Bring a cushion (hard seats).
5. For further information contact Paul Chandler (PDMHS Meets Co-ordinator & organiser of the event) - tel. 01246-220773.
6. Peak District Mines Historical Society (PDMHS) Event with all welcome.

HIDDEN EARTH 2004: Brewery Arts Centre, Kendal, 1 - 3 October, 2004

Details are now on the Hidden Earth Website at www.hidden-earth.org.uk

Pre-Conference events at Dalesbridge Centre, Austwick on 29 & 30 Sept. & 1st. Oct.

Pre-Conference field trips, including caving trips, are being organised in Yorkshire, based at Dalesbridge, to link in with the China Caves project. Meet on Wednesday evening at Dalesbridge. Details on Hidden Earth website as they become available or contact Bookings Officer Wendy Williams on 01749-679839.

Caving Film & Winter Mountaineering Lectures

A 'Best Of Kendal Film Festival' evening is being organised at the Showroom Cinema in Sheffield on October 13th which will feature, amongst other films, Gavin Newman's award winning film 'Wookey Exposed'. The evening will start at 8.15pm, cost £7 full and £5 concession, last for 2½ hours and consist of 7 films (caving, skiing, kayaking, mountaineering and climbing). See www.heason.net for more information.

DCA/BCA Cavers Workshop, February 2005

Planning is already in hand for this event - further details and exact dates from Nigel Atkins as soon as we have them. Contact: Tel: 01283 210666, Fax: 01283 210777, Mob: 07831 449919, Em. nigel@pennineorganisation.com

SUSS THREATENED WITH CLOSURE

Sheffield University Spel. Soc. have been told by "USport" (a joint partnership of university and union which runs all the sport and is not answerable to the students) that they are to be closed down before the new term (along with 7 other "outdoor activity" clubs). SUSS are attempting to fight this and may be able to form a separate club, not financially supported by USport but linked to the University in some way. They are concerned that an attempt may be made by USport to sell off their equipment to outside caving clubs before they are able to sort things out, so they appeal to clubs: please do not attempt to buy caving gear being sold off in this way. Advice is being sought from Council of Higher Education Caving Clubs, BCA, DCA and BCRA - everyone is trying to help.

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD

www.theDCA.org.uk

dca@theDCA.org.uk

15 September 2004

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