



DERBYSHIRE CAVING ASSOCIATION

Information Circular 2014/1, Nov. 2013 to Feb. 2014

NEXT DCA MEETING

Annual General Meeting, Saturday, 1st. March 2014, 10am, Monyash Village Hall

(NOTE CHANGE OF DATE FROM 22ND. FEB. FOR THE DCA AGM 2014)

The AGM will be followed, as usual, by an Open Council meeting

Please note that, in order to have a vote at the AGM, DCA clubs must also be paid-up members of BCA for 2014 and should arrange to have a nominated club rep. who must present written authorisation from their Club Secretary or Chairman at or before the beginning of each meeting.

Individual members wishing to vote must be paid-up members of DCA for 2014.

Nominations for Officer posts may be made at the meeting but if the nominee is not present at the meeting their prior written agreement must be obtained. Note that DCA Chairman, Bob Dearman, has said that he will be standing down this year, as will Assistant Access Officer, Karen Slatcher. At the time of writing we have no indication of which other officers wish to stand down or are willing to stand again for election.

CONSERVATION & ACCESS

If you have any queries or problems about Conservation or Access in the region, please email Mel Milner on conservation-off@theDCA.org.uk, Ewan Cameron on access-off@theDCA.org.uk or tel. 07966-184308 or, alternatively, contact the DCA Chairman, Bob Dearman, on chairman@theDCA.org.uk or tel. 01298-85594.

New Arrangements for Peak Speedwell System Access, Feb. 2014:

The website for access guidelines and trip availability can be found at www.peakspeedwell.info.

The Peak keyholders would prefer it if cavers could use the website and the following emails:

titanaccess@peakspeedwell.info peakaccess@peakspeedwell.info

Alan Brentnall - 01663 746476 will take the calls for anybody who doesn't have email and would like to book a trip.

Wharf Pipe Shaft lids

The lid on the Climbing shaft has been repaired by Orpheus C.C. so that it can now be fastened down properly using a spanner. However, it needs further attention at some time to alter the fitting so that it cannot be damaged by the lid falling onto the projecting bolt - this is in hand to be done in due course. The bolts and nuts on the Engine Shaft lid also require attention and this is in hand.

Jug Holes Adit

The bolt on the Jug Holes adit gate is still not working properly - this entrance should be left bolted spanner-tight (a requirement of the landowner) but this is impossible at present although the gate can be held shut by the chain on the bolt. Work is still in hand to sort this so be prepared and take a spanner with you when you visit Jugholes.

Devonshire Cavern

Many thanks to Ewan Cameron who organised a clean-up of the graffiti left by vandals while the gate was unlocked last summer. Thanks also to all those who gave their time to do the job. Thanks to work by a number of volunteers the door and locking system are now working as they should, although further work is planned to stabilise the entrance later this year. Please keep an eye on the place and notify DCA if anything untoward occurs again.

EQUIPMENT AND SAFETY

If you have any queries or problems about Equipment or Safety in the region, please contact the DCA

Equipment Officer: Bob Dearman Tel. 01298-85594, Mob. 07855-920087, Em. equipment@theDCA.org.uk or

DCA Projects Officer: Dan Hibberts projects@theDCA.org.uk, Mob. 07846-526463.

Winnats Head Cave upstream pitches

DCA have replaced deteriorating anchors beyond Down in the Sewer in Winnats Head Cave with new anchors under the BCA Anchor Scheme (the topo is on the DCA website: www.theDCA.org.uk). All the new anchors have stainless steel maillons attached to limit corrosion. Note that DCA is not responsible for any ropes attached.

Cliff Cavern has now been re-bolted

DCA installers have re-bolted Cliff Cavern with the new BP anchors supplied by BCA. The topo can be found on the Peak/Speedwell website: www.peakspeedwell.info.

Pilkington's Cavern pitches being re-bolted

DCA installers are in the process of re-bolting the pitches in Pilkington's Cavern with the new BP anchors. When the job is complete we'll let you know. The topo will be posted on the Peak/Speedwell website: www.peakspeedwell.info.

Access to Sidetrack Cave in Eldon Quarry

Following the incident of interference with the abseil rope to Sidetrack by persons unknown, Jules Barratt and Bob Dearman have put in three new BP anchors. Two of the anchors were installed in the solid slab adjacent to the existing rusty bolt to facilitate a Y hang. The other was placed as a re-belay 10ft down the cliff in the only bit of structurally solid limestone they could find.

This means that the rope between the Y hang and the re-belay should be kept as tight as possible so that in the unlikely event of the single re-belay bolt failing the load would come immediately onto the top Y hang. However, if the rigging at the top is interfered with it is unlikely that anyone would climb down over easy but dubious rock to unclip the re-belay thus leaving visitors to the cave on the bench below a good measure of protection for the ascent back to the top of the quarry. Also it would be a good idea for anyone abseiling down to tightly tie off the bottom of the rope to one of the many boulders lying on the bench to prevent it being pulled up.

A reminder that cavers should continue to comply with the arrangements made for access to Eldon Quarry - details are on the DCA website at www.theDCA.org.uk.

WEIL'S DISEASE

We have heard from a Derbyshire caver who became very ill during January after contracting Weil's Disease (Leptospirosis), most probably during cave diving, which appears to involve a greater risk of catching the disease. Weil's is carried by the urine of rats and exists in virtually all caves where there is any chance of run-off from farms, industrial estates, anywhere there is food waste, etc. The incubation period is between 7 and 13 days after the infection and symptoms are initially flu-like with fever but it can progress to bruising on the skin, sore eyes, nose bleeds and jaundice and, in some cases, has proved fatal.

The disease is curable if recognised in time, but many doctors in urban areas will never have encountered it. If you have any reason to suspect that you have been infected, you may need to draw your doctor's attention to the possibility that the symptoms could be Weil's Disease. The BCA website has an excellent free leaflet for you to download which contains much more information - it even proved useful to hand it to the doctor in the case mentioned above, who was able to take immediate action based on the information contained without having to wait for the results of tests.

To obtain the leaflet, go to the BCA website: www.british-caving.org.uk, then go via **services > publications > Free Advice Note: Weil's Disease Leaflet**.

ITC OUTDOOR FIRST AID COURSES

At Thornbridge Outdoors

There are ITC Outdoor First Aid courses planned at Thornbridge Outdoors on the following dates:

Thur 6th & Fri 7th March 2014
Sat 8th & Sun 9th March 2014
Mon 14th & Tues 15th April 2014
Thur 12th & Fri 13th June 2014
Sat 14th & Sun 15th June 2014

Ideal for cavers, course costs £120. Information and booking forms on the website: www.thornbridgeoutdoors.co.uk.

A2E First Aid Training

The next A2E ITC Outdoor First Aid courses are on the following dates:

February 22nd -23rd, Hope Valley, Peak District
March 11th -12th, Ironbridge, Telford

These are 16 hour assessed courses suitable for NGB award validations. £120 per person including manual and certification. Discounts for multiple bookings or bookings at least one month ahead. An **Emergency First Aid at Work** certificate can also be obtained from the ITC Outdoor First Aid course for a small extra admin fee. A2E can also run courses for groups at their venue.

Booking forms can be downloaded off the website: www.a2efirstaidtraining.co.uk

ON-LINE ACCESS TO BCRA CAVES & KARST SCIENCE, ETC.

It is intended that in the near future BCRA's monthly rate for access to its online content will drop from the current £6 to zero. (Or to be accurate, when paying online for a monthly access user id the £6 fee will be "optional"). (It will also be more straightforward to pay - it's not very customer-friendly at the moment.) To find out more, go online to www.bcra.org.uk

FOR YOUR NEWSLETTER / NOTICEBOARD

www.theDCA.org.uk

13 February 2014

<p><i>Hon. Secretary: Jenny Potts,</i> 3 Greenway, Hulland Ward, Ashbourne, DE6 3FE Tel. 01335-370629 Email secretary@theDCA.org.uk</p>
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